■ WORLD/A11
Thaksin defies protest threat, won't quit

■ BUSINESS/B1
Peso surges to 51.65 to $1; stocks up 1.6%

■ METRO/A21
Ex-Taguig mayor cleared of graft charges

INQ7.net
INQ7 marks 5th year with new online tools/ NEWS A4

'Wanted' solons prefer cold floor to warm hotel beds

By Norman Bordadora and Michael Lim Ubac

REFUSING AN OFFER TO stay in a hotel, five lawmakers facing charges of rebellion spent their first night in custody together, sleeping on couches and on the floor of a cold room.

WANTED/A2

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Wednesday, March 1, 2006 ** 5 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 83 P18 www.inq7.net

Army chief forms elite anticoup unit in Metro

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan and Alcuin Papa

IN AN INDICATION THAT THE MILITARY UNREST is far from over, the Army chief has formed a 1,200-strong anticoup force that will respond to "any contingency or threat."

The special team composed of members of crack units in the Army—the Special Forces Regiment, Scout Rangers Regiment, Light Reaction

ARMY/A6

SC: No TRO against 1017

Another Palace order under way, Joker warns

By Philip C. Tubeza, Armand N. Nocum and Dawn L. Lucas

SHE'S ONLY JUST BEGUN.

While critics slam her proclamation of a state of national emergency, President Macapagal-Arroyo is planning to issue yet another order to rout her perceived political enemies, Sen. Joker Arroyo said yesterday.

"In what form? We don't know but in this country, there is never a secret," Arroyo said. "What we should worry about is the third one. I don't know if it is creeping martial law but there's something coming."

The warning came amid what appeared to be a setback for Arroyo's critics in the Supreme Court.

Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban yesterday said that while the high tribunal was giving high priority to four petitions questioning the constitutionality of Proclamation No. 1017, it would not be goaded into issuing a temporary restraining order (TRO).

In an en banc meeting, the court set for Tuesday next week a hearing on the petitions and asked the government to submit by Monday its

SC, MEYNARD/A5

PEP TALK: Philippine Army chief Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon shares a light moment with elite members of what he described as an anticoup unit during a pep talk at Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio. The special operations task force is intended to counter any destabilization moves against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Congress unites behind 5 solons linked to coup plot

REP. SATUR OCAMPO faces the media with the sleeping bag he slept in on the cold floor of the House of Representatives.

By Michael Lim Ubac and Armand Nocum

DEFENDING THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES from "encroachments of the presidency," congressional leaders yesterday rebuked Malacañang for issuing an arresting party-list lawmakers facing charges of rebellion.

The rare show of unity at the House often wrecked by partisan politics came after Department of Justice prosecutors tried to subject five lawmakers to inquest proceedings over allegations they were involved in a plot to overthrow President Macapagal-Arroyo.

An angry Rep. Satur Ocampo, one of those accused by the police of being involved in the plot, took the floor and denounced the "desecration of this institution" by the Arroyo administration's use of force.

Crossing party lines, administration and opposition House members in plenary session called on Speaker Jose de Venecia to defend the institutional independence of the legislature.

"The only way they can close Congress is when the Army is sent in to close it," declared Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr., stressing that it was not the duty of the House leadership "to negotiate the arrest of any House member

CONGRESS/A5

UNDER HEAVY guard and handcuffed to an escort, Marine Capt. Nicanor Faeldon arrives at the Makati Regional Trial Court for a hearing in connection with his alleged participation in the Oakwood mutiny.

Economic team told: RP not yet over the hump

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Tina Arceo-Dumlao and Roneel W. Domingo

THE COUNTRY WILL REMAIN UNDER A state of national emergency at least until Saturday because security advisers of President Macapagal-Arroyo still believe that a plot by leftist and rightist elements to topple her has not been scuttled, Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said yesterday.

Ms Arroyo signed Presidential Proclamation No. 1017 placing the country under a state of emergency on Friday.

At a briefing conducted by the Cabinet security cluster for economic managers on Monday night, security officials said they needed a little more time to assess and monitor the situation, according to Teves.

ECONOMIC/A8

Poverty grim reminder on Ash Wednesday

By Christian V. Esguerra

ON THE EVE OF ASH WEDNESday marking the start of Lent, the president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines issued the reminder that poverty, not politics, was the Filipino life-oppressor's most serious problem.

"The most immediate and urgent priority of the common Filipinos is their daily struggle to earn their livelihood," Jaro Archbishop Angel Lagdameo said in a statement titled "Lent: A Call to Transformation."

"Poverty, despite the professed development at the macro level, remains the heaviest burden the country bears," he said.

Lagdameo had earlier called for sobriety amid reports of a supposed coup attempt against the administration of President Macapagal-Arroyo, whose alleged manipulation of the 2004 presidential election remains unresolved.

"To all parties concerned, we as shepherds appeal to you to be open to reason and respect truth and the rule of law and to avoid creating the atmosphere of belligerency—because innocents

POVERTY/A5

UP students, teachers walk out vs 1017

By DJ Yap and Christian V. Esguerra

STUDENTS AND TEACHERS ON the campus of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City, walked out of their classes yesterday to open defiance of Presidential Proclamation No. 1017, which bans rallies.

More protests are being planned against the proclamation that President Macapagal-Arroyo issued on Friday placing the country under an emergency to thwart an alleged coup attempt.

Joel Cadlu, president of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines, called on judges, lawyers, students and other activists to hold protests Friday, exactly one week after Ms Arroyo's declaration.

Catholic and Protestant groups also assailed PP 1017. The groups, led by the United Church

UP STUDENTS/A10

Int'l group seeks halt to media crackdown

THE NEW YORK-BASED COMmittee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) yesterday urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to stop her crackdown on the Philippine press, saying it threatened hard-won democracy.

Also yesterday Senate President Franklin Drilon said the administration's directive to the Philippine National Police to set standards for media was "blatantly unlawful and unconstitutional."

"They cannot close the media under any circumstances, even when they declare martial law, because the right to information, the freedom of expression, the right to free speech, these are all contained in the Bill of Rights," Drilon said in an interview.

In a letter to Ms Arroyo, the CPJ stressed that here was the only administration since dictator Ferdinand Marcos was ousted in 1986 to use "restrictive means" that "send a profoundly chilling message about the limits of press freedom."

The letter by CPJ executive

INT'L/A10

A1
WEATHER FORECAST
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
Second FRONTPAGE
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2006

US closely monitoring dev'ts in RP, Thailand

WASHINGTON—THE UNITED STATES IS MONITORING closely the political turmoil in its two Southeast Asian allies, Thailand and the Philippines, amid extra-constitutional challenges to the democracies.

In Thailand, the main opposition parties are boycotting a snap election, called by embattled Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra amid mammoth street protests demanding his resignation.

In the Philippines, just days after President Macapagal-Arroyo imposed emergency rule after an alleged coup plot linking military and police officers, officers in many but remain alive even as she widens a crackdown on the purported plotters.

The United States has big stakes in the two Southeast Asian states.

Thailand and the Philippines, the only country in the region where Washington has troops, enjoy enhanced military ties, one non-NATO ally, a status conferred only on those US friends.

Their top concern is Washington's war on terror, which has been the centerpiece of the administration of President George W. Bush.

Both countries have also been key battlegrounds in the global struggle against communism during the Cold War and, more recently, in efforts to bring democracy to Asia's most efficient dictatorship.

In Thailand, too, the US military operation appears worried that if there is violence, the long night interviewer and signal to the Prime Minister that his time is up.

Concern, interest

Philippine authorities have already announced four police officers and filed charges in connection with the alleged coup plot linking military and police officers, officers in many but remain alive even as she widens a crackdown on the purported plotters.

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Biazon: Garci scandal behind breakaway try

By TJ Burgonio

THE BRAINCHILD ACTIONIST BP Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim and Col. Ariel Querubin that fueled coup rumors culminating in last 05-day's state of emergency proclamation may have been an offshoot of the military's failure to investigate four generals implicated in the "Hello Garci" election fraud scandal, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said yesterday.

Biazon disclosed in a hastily called news briefing that Lim and Querubin were among members of the Young Officers' Union (YOU) who sought an audience with him last July 2 to press for a Senate investigation of the role the generals played in alleged election cheating in Mindanao.

The YOU members had threatened to go en mass leave or resign if the government refused to grant their request for an investigation, Biazon said.

"It was just simply a statement of dismay over the fact that nothing was being done in relation to the mention of four generals allegedly being involved in the commission of election fraud," Biazon said.

Asked if last week's moves by Lim and Querubin were an offshoot of their dismay, Biazon replied: "Of course indirectly can actually know what went on in the minds of these two gentlemen, but definitely that could be a logical assumption."

"Up until now, there's no evidence of that (coup talks) by the YOU," added Biazon, chair of the committee on defense.

In Gen. Roy Kyamko (ret.) and Brig. Gen. Francisco Gudani (ret.), Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon and Maj. Gen. Gabriel Habacon were mentioned in the Garci tapes as having presided in fraud during the May 2004 elections, which they all denied.

On Biazon's request, Gen. Efren Abu, AFP chief of staff at the time, conducted an investigation but his successor, Gen. Generoso Senga, said the probe did not focus on the involvement of the generals in the scandal.

The military has completed its report on the probe but has declined to release it, saying it was up to Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz and President Macapagal-Arroyo to decide whether to release the report or not.

Meanwhile, 16 Senate bloggers, a Senate chief, mentioned with National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales through the Garci tapes, yesterday urged the government to open up to the public its files on the alleged fraud.

"The government is incapacitated because government funds are being used for rebellion, bourgot said in a telephone interview. "It just took us some time for the guerrero to act... because they know this was something big."

He said that while the Senate leaders were "above ground" and serving in Congress, they were also "preparing with extremists."

With Blanche S. Rivera

A1

GMA hikes wages

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo issued an administrative order yesterday granting a P1,000 increase in the monthly salaries of more than one million national government employees, including members of the military and the national police.

Malacañang said the President issued the order so the Senate had yet to pass a special appropriations bill balanced by the House of Representatives allocating P23.1 billion to fund the salary increases. The special appropriations bill had been measured to in light of Congress's failure to pass the 2006 budget.

Ms Arroyo announced the granting of the P1,000 increase at a retirement ceremony for Director-General Avelino Razon Jr. after she declared her government had thwarted a leftist-rightist plot to topple her and grab power. Chris Bon O. Invention

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Canon

Huge cross to rise at S Leyte landslide site

By Jaci Arnaiz
PDI Visayas Bureau

ST. BERNARD — A HUGE CROSS will be planted on Friday at the site of the village of Guinsuganan here which was buried by a landslide on Feb. 17, killing some 1,000 residents.

Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Lerias said the provincial government would lead the formal blessing and planting of a huge cross at the Guinsuganan disaster site which would be turned into a memorial park cum resettlement.

Lerias said a contrite of flowers will rain from from a helicopter at about the same time that the cross is begin up as the owner of the landslide area will be blessed by a priest with holy water.

The search for survivors in Guinsuganan officially ended last Friday, a week after the killer landslide struck the area.

"The search and rescue phase is over. The decision was reached upon the recommendation of the experts. They feel it will take a miracle to find survivors due to the unfavorable terrain," Lerias had told the Inquirer.

As of Feb. 28, some 132 bodies had been recovered while 972 remained missing and feared dead. Some 3,304 residents were still at the evacuation centers.

Some volunteers, local and foreign, had pulled out by Monday. Only about 100 Filipino soldiers have remained at the disaster area for retrieval operations and to secure the site which was declared off-limits to civilians.

A 98-man Undersecretary medical contingent will stay for two more weeks to attend to the medical needs of the survivors.

Lerias said classes would remain suspended at schools that were turned into evacuation centers.

Through the Department of Education, she said, learning activities will be conducted for the children.

Lerias said the provincial government will soon turn over to the municipal government of St. Bernard the 10 schoolbuildings who were replaced by the landslide.

Capitol Officer-in-Charge Fe Hildegarde Lim had discussed Department of Budget and Management Secretary Romulo Neri to personally supervise the implementation of the scholarship grants.

The Capitol chief also said the survivors would likewise undergo various counseling under the Capitol-initiated Sandy program in cooperation with the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

Metrobank Bank and Trust Company (Metrobank) has donated P5 million for the victims of the Leyte landslide.

Meanwhile, residents in at least five villages in the province will be resettled because of fear of more landslides.

Lerias said geologists have surveyed 11 villages that were evacuated after the Guinsuganan landslide.

Which reports Rose Ancheta Sepulveda, Phil Visayas Bureau; Alexis Pepa and AP

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25-yr RP governance roadmap is unveiled

By Leo Barcial

AMID THE STATE OF NATIONAL EMERGENCY, a former finance secretary who now chairs the Institute for Solidarity in Asia (ISA) yesterday called on every citizen to do their part to be governed a sovereign state resistant importing governance in the country in the next 25 years.

Yap Bayan Testimony Lapu Lapu is the Nation Until: Philippines 2030 Roadmap" is a transformed system that includes responsible citizenship, a lean and smart government, strengthened "fabrics of change" and good governance.

The roadmap evolved from the growing consensus that there is a lack of genuine love for, and identification with, the country.

During a conference Tuesday of businessmen, professionals and local governments executives at the Manila Peninsula, Anna Dominique Herbosa said the "stupid" cop need be counted as responsible citizens.

"A sense of emergency calls for a sense of urgency," he said, as he challenged families, schools and business enterprises to stand up and be counted as the "precursors of values and virtues that would make every Pinoy act always in every circumstance what are ... all of us, each one of us — can do for our country."

He called on "every citizen to serve as consciousness of organizations" that would be the real torque of their area so they would contribute to the renewed good of the country."

He also asked every local government unit to "become the beacons of light and hope."

Endorsing the roadmap, Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines president and Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca Lapid Lapid-Inno said, "We need a new breed of leaders," as he asserted that "more than a few leaders act more like chanel of drivers."

Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz spelled out the measures that the Philippine defense system is carrying out to ensure that it eventually becomes "self-sustainable."

Among these are wealth-year defense planning system, improved operations, intelligence and training and a readiness capability.

With a report from Cyril Bonabenia

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INQ7 marks 5th year with new online tools

By Jose G. Manilla
INQ7.net

INQ7 INTERACTIVE, WHICH OPERATES the 5th anniversary on Feb. 27, is making a bid to reach even more readers through new online tools like blogs and podcasts.

The INQ7.net anniversary site at www.INQ7.net/5 gives readers a preview of the kind of interactive tools they can expect from INQ7 this year.

In pushing the growth of online journalism in the Philippines, INQ7.net's goal is to enhance news technology without changing the basics of good journalism, said INQ7.net editor in chief Fe Zaldivar.

INQ7 net executive editor Leo Bingas said online tools such as blogs and podcasts would allow INQ7.net to reach out to a new generation of readers, while stressing that these services will have to be adapted in the needs of a news organization.

"We have to tap that medium and access our readership there beyond what you see on print, TV and all. We could tap an entirely new generation online," he said.

A blog is a website updated on a regular basis. Its most common use is as an online journal or diary available for public viewing.

A podcast is a web feed of audio or video files placed on the Internet for anyone to download, to connect to about creating content for an audience that wants to listen when they want, where they want and how they want.

The INQ7.net anniversary site emphasizes the role of user-generated content, allowing readers to publish their own articles and post comments on stories using the blog. Articles and comments from readers, however, will not be posted immediately on the blog but sent to a moderator.

The site also wants to encourage readers to create their own video clips and audio greetings that could be included in the INQ7.net anniversary site.

To mean that high-end equipment is not necessary, the video clips and audio for the podcast were taken using camera phones. INQ7 officials allowed the video to their anniversary greetings to be taken with mobile phones.

INQ7.net will also unveil in 2006 international and localized editions of its site that would target different countries and communities, Bulletin said.

Quirino's death marked

QUIRINO

THE 50TH DEATH ANNIVERsary today of former President Elpidio R. Quirino will be marked with a simple ceremony at 8:30 a.m. at the South Cemetery.

Presidential adviser Nicky Quirino-Delgado and granddaughter Cory Quirino will lead the commemorative rites that will include a wreath-laying and a prayer-rite by the Quirino High School.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, chair of the Liberal Party, will represent the government. Quirino, the sixth President of the country, was one of the founders of the Liberal Party.

Quirino, who was born Vigan, Ilocos Sur, succeeded President Manuel Roxas and served from 1948 to 1953. He died on Feb. 29, 1956.

Quirino has been called the "Father of Philippine Industrialization," having designed the economic blueprint for the country. The Central Bank was created and the Ambuklao and Maria Cristina power plants set up during his term.

One of his first acts as President was to re-establish ties with Japan and initiate steps to create the Union of Pacific Nations.

SC defers action on 1017

To page A2

justification for the President's action on Friday last week. The court opted not to grant the request for the issuance of a TRO until it had heard all arguments, Pangalangan said.

Senator Arroyo said his sources told him that the President had another series "under army" after she succeeded in "unincapacitating" the Senate through Executive Order No. 464 and frightened media owners with Proclamation No. 1017.

Pimentel, however, said these orders "were planned in advance" for this "long siesta" but were being implemented in a calculated manner that he described as "presidential treachery."

The senator said 1464 and 1017 are not spur of the moment presidential harassers. Both were planned in advance. He even said in there's rebellion coming against an enemy, we don't know yet because, you see, it's the President who chooses her enemies."

Arroyo said Chel Malacañang was embarrassed to issue this supposed third order because there had been no strong public backlash against Proclamation No. 1017 and Executive Order No. 464, which has effectively been suppressing in congressional hearings militias the President's opposed.

Media owners frightened

He also noted that media owners had "become frightened" by Malacañang's threat to take over Bank Guadamilan.

"The thing is that the Palace will not stop. Malacañang thinks that they are winning. The Senate has been paralyzed. The media, for all the braggadocio of the owners, are frightened," Arroyo said.

Arroyo said that Chel's cohort since planned all we DO did was react in September last year.

"How would we even know that 1017 [was] directed against the media? Nobody knew it. But it's not really [about] 'unidentified armed,' it's media. The one that has been affected so much [by 1017] is the media," he said.

"Nobody predicted that. Nobody knew it but now it's very clear. They're not strict (Arroyo's party-list Rep. Cirigido) Bebot Bondoc (Pampanga Rep.) Sergio Ortenga. They're other worlds," he added.

Arroyo said he did not expect Malacañang to lift the state of national emergency any time soon.

Constitution is so mere

"They will not lift it. They're winning from their point of view. You should quit when you're ahead but they're not quitting. The Constitution to me most awful as Ghosts was served," he said.

"Ghosts, she does not care about how many enemies she has. She doesn't care about winning friends. She cares only about acquiring enemies. Here in the Senate, Ghosts has no breach," he said.

Arroyo also said that media owners should defend their personal rights pressure from the Palace.

Chief Justice Panganiban told reporters that the magistrates had agreed that the high court must resolve the issue immediately because it involved basic issues, including the freedom of speech and freedom of the press.

"The TRO [issue] is clear-process steps when is significant issue, you must hear the other side. A TRO is issued in order to maintain status quo. If the status quo has changed, I would have to compare the court between now and Tuesday," Panganiban said.

"Since we know that there is some urgency in this, it can't required the respondents to submit a comment within a non-extendible period of five days," Panganiban said.

Highest priority

"Freedom of speech and expression are quite very important, the highest priority in the BE of rights, so any alleged violation would require attention of the court. We are giving it the highest priority," he said.

As of Monday, four petitions had been received in the Supreme Court, including a challenge by the Daily Tribune, which was raided by police on Saturday.

The fourth one was filed by former Gen. Lowa Legarda-members.

Legarda said directives issued by the Arroyo had "invaded almost all freedoms and rights guaranteed under the 1987 Constitution to be game of arguments acts of terrorism/lawless violence in the country."

These directives, she stressed, "encroach[ed] on and without any legal purpose drag into the ambit the suppression of the countries fatally guaranteed freedoms and civil liberties, among them the freedom of expression and freedom of rights."

Panganiban said the court would consolidate all these cases along with those yet to be filed into one unit.

Guidelines for broadcast

Also yesterday, the National Telecommunications Commission said it would allow the main umbrella organization for the broadcast media to draw up its own guidelines on news coverage during the prevailing emergency.

NTC chief Brondi Solis said in an interview that guidelines formulated by the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas (KBP) would be issued by same organization and would be applied uniformly to all broadcast media facilities.

"The NTC will endorse these guidelines even to non-KBP members," Solis said in an interview. "If they don't comply to it, we'll still issue it."

Government is prohibiting media entities from airing reports that incite rebellion, arousing civic disturbances during combat operations, and airing propaganda.

Solis said the KBP would facilitate the guidelines.

He said that while the NTC had no duty of directly monitoring foreign broadcast satellite that might violate government regulations, for offline was coordinating with the the organizations of cable television operators to see how the guidelines could be enforced.

But if it's impossible or regulate, we won't do that," he said.

Solis pointed out that the NTC had no power to shut down broadcast outfits under Proclamation No. 1017, but added that supervisors already had such existing powers under their charters.

The NTC chief also stressed that the government would not impose more stringent control mechanisms to control the press, but would instead only implement existing guidelines, including accused promulgated in 1989 used to shut down radio stations that were found to have aired denials or troop movements during a coup attempt against the government. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Tarra S. Quismundo, Cynthia D. Rubrico, Michael Lim Ubac, Jr., Jeannette Andrade, Nikko Dizon, Aurea Calica, Jaime Laude, Nestor Etolle, Marlon Ramos, Norman Bordadora, Tonette Orejas, Delon Porcalla, Jerry E. Esplanada, Jess Diaz, Ding Cervantes, Jocelyn Montemayor, Ellen Tordesillas, Abigail Kwok Bañares, Ma. Ceres P. Doyo, Inquirer Research and Inquirer Central Desk*

ARROYO

Poverty grim reminder . . .

To page A2

people are likely to become involuntary victims of selfish interest," he continued, adding:

"The situation is a challenge to compassionately prove that your passion and concern for the poor and the suffering are of higher value than personal comfort."

Repentance

Legislators said the Christian message of the Lenten season—an invitation to repentance—was particularly significant in the light of the current political situation.

"It is a call to reconciliation," he said. "Considering the social, economic and political crises we are in, the virtue of change and transformation becomes a pressing passion and obsession."

Legislators also said the message of Jesus Christ rising from the dead on Easter Sunday, according to Catholic belief, should transcend the spiritual and result in a "transformation in our economic, social and political life."

"Just as a call to transformation means that out of the repentance of believers to the Gospel, the slum dwellings are transformed to permanent shelters, the poor are given health benefits, the marginalized are offered liberating education, the exploited sex slaves dignified employment and malnourished children real food," he said.

Legislators described the transformation of society as "the fruit of repentance and reform of life."

'Truly moral society'

In very many concrete terms, Legislators said, a renewal of moral values should mean "removing the energies that one uses for graft and corruption into energies for better public service."

"We hope that from the 'ashes' of political crisis and corrupted institutions will resurrect a transformed nation, a truly moral society, built up in truth, justice, freedom and love," he said.

2 Pinoys killed in S Arabia

TWO FILIPINOS COMMUTING TO WORK were killed by assailants in Saudi Arabia as security forces in Riyadh clashed with suspects attempting to attack the world's largest oil processing plant, Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said yesterday.

Conversation mothers Abel Manuevela and Rita Lorzada were killed Monday by bullets that hit their shuttle bus as it passed through the Saudis director while Saudi police were conducting a manhunt for militants, Romulo said in statement.

Three other Filipinos on the same bus – Isabel Binsada, Salvador Abon and Jimmy Dever – were wounded, Romulo said.

Saudi authorities said they killed five suspects after assaulting the militants' hideout in the Al-Hamra section of Riyadh.

An al Qaeda statement posted on the Internet claimed responsibility for the attack. AFP

The Republic of the Philippines

hereby announces

TERMS OF THE 5-YEAR AND 7-YEAR BENCHMARK BONDS

5-YEAR BENCHMARK BOND		7-YEAR BENCHMARK BOND	
ISIN:	PIBD0511C622	ISIN:	PIBD0711C430
PRINCIPAL ACCEPTED:	PhP 30b	PRINCIPAL ACCEPTED:	PhP 10b
PRINCIPAL SUBMITTED:	PhP 34b	PRINCIPAL SUBMITTED:	PhP 20b
SIZE OF BENCHMARK BOND:	PhP 34b	SIZE OF BENCHMARK BOND:	PhP 17b

THE FINAL CLEARING YIELDS FOR EACH SERIES OF ELIGIBLE BONDS ARE AS SHOWN:

ISIN	Maturity Date	Coupon Rate	Final Clearing Yield
PIBD0506A064	2/25/2006	10.625%	6.00%
PIBD0506C035	4/6/2006	11.875%	6.10%
PIBD0506D036	5/10/2006	12.750%	6.15%
PIBD0506E044	6/13/2006	13.750%	6.18%
PIBD0506F035	7/27/2006	14.625%	6.20%
PIBD0506G042	8/17/2006	12.625%	6.20%
PIBD0506H059	9/14/2006	12.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506I052	10/4/2006	12.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506J077	11/2/2006	11.75%	6.20%
PIBD0506K075	12/4/2006	10.625%	6.20%
PIBD0506L083	1/8/2007	10.625%	6.20%
PIBD0506M074	2/25/2006	10.625%	6.20%
PIBD0506N082	3/12/2007	11.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506O099	4/2/2007	11.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506P114	5/2/2007	12.500%	6.20%
PIBD0506Q122	6/14/2007	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506R139	7/26/2007	14.250%	6.20%
PIBD0506S143	8/16/2007	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506T158	9/13/2007	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506U166	10/11/2007	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506V172	11/8/2007	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506W188	12/13/2007	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506X194	1/17/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506Y200	2/14/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0506Z225	3/13/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507A057	4/3/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507B063	5/8/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507C071	6/5/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507D087	7/3/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507E093	8/7/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507F109	9/4/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507G115	10/2/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507H122	11/6/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507I120	12/4/2008	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507J146	1/8/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507K151	2/5/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507L169	3/5/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507M159	4/2/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507N167	5/7/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507O180	6/4/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507P195	7/2/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507Q202	8/6/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507R218	9/3/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507S224	10/1/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507T232	11/5/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507U240	12/3/2009	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507V256	1/7/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507W262	2/4/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507X278	3/4/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507Y284	4/1/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0507Z309	5/6/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508A055	6/3/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508B061	7/1/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508C077	8/5/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508D083	9/2/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508E099	10/7/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508F104	11/4/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508G112	12/2/2010	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508H129	1/6/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508I127	2/3/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508J143	3/3/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508K158	4/7/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508L166	5/5/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508M156	6/2/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508N164	7/7/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508O188	8/4/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508P193	9/1/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508Q200	10/6/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508R218	11/3/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508S224	12/1/2011	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508T232	1/5/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508U240	2/2/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508V256	3/1/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508W262	4/5/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508X278	5/3/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508Y284	6/7/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0508Z309	7/5/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509A055	8/2/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509B061	9/6/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509C077	10/4/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509D083	11/8/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509E099	12/6/2012	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509F104	1/3/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509G112	2/7/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509H129	3/7/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509I127	4/4/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509J143	5/2/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509K158	6/6/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509L166	7/4/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509M156	8/1/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509N164	9/5/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509O188	10/3/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509P193	11/7/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509Q200	12/5/2013	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509R218	1/9/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509S224	2/6/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509T232	3/6/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509U240	4/3/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509V256	5/8/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509W262	6/5/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509X278	7/3/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509Y284	8/7/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0509Z309	9/4/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510A055	10/2/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510B061	11/6/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510C077	12/4/2014	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510D083	1/8/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510E099	2/5/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510F104	3/5/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510G112	4/2/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510H129	5/7/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510I127	6/4/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510J143	7/2/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510K158	8/6/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510L166	9/3/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510M156	10/1/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510N164	11/5/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510O188	12/3/2015	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510P193	1/7/2016	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510Q200	2/4/2016	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510R218	3/3/2016	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510S224	4/7/2016	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510T232	5/5/2016	13.875%	6.20%
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PIBD0510V256	7/7/2016	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510W262	8/4/2016	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0510X278	9/1/2016	13.875%	6.20%
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PIBD0511G112	6/1/2017	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511H129	7/6/2017	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511I127	8/3/2017	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511J143	9/7/2017	13.875%	6.20%
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PIBD0511L166	11/2/2017	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511M156	12/7/2017	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511N164	1/4/2018	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511O188	2/1/2018	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511P193	3/1/2018	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511Q200	4/5/2018	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511R218	5/3/2018	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511S224	6/7/2018	13.875%	6.20%
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PIBD0511U240	8/2/2018	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511V256	9/6/2018	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511W262	10/4/2018	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511X278	11/8/2018	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0511Y284	12/6/2018	13.875%	6.20%
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PIBD0512C077	4/4/2019	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0512D083	5/2/2019	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0512E099	6/6/2019	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0512F104	7/4/2019	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0512G112	8/1/2019	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0512H129	9/5/2019	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0512I127	10/3/2019	13.875%	6.20%
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PIBD0513H129	11/5/2021	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513I127	12/3/2021	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513J143	1/7/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513K158	2/4/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513L166	3/4/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513M156	4/1/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513N164	5/6/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513O188	6/3/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513P193	7/1/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513Q200	8/5/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513R218	9/2/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513S224	10/7/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513T232	11/4/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513U240	12/2/2022	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513V256	1/6/2023	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513W262	2/3/2023	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513X278	3/3/2023	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513Y284	4/7/2023	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0513Z309	5/5/2023	13.875%	6.20%
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PIBD0514B061	7/7/2023	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514C077	8/4/2023	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514D083	9/1/2023	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514E099	10/6/2023	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514F104	11/3/2023	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514G112	12/1/2023	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514H129	1/5/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514I127	2/2/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514J143	3/2/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514K158	4/6/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514L166	5/4/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514M156	6/1/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514N164	7/6/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514O188	8/3/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514P193	9/7/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514Q200	10/5/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514R218	11/2/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514S224	12/7/2024	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514T232	1/4/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514U240	2/1/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514V256	3/1/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514W262	4/5/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514X278	5/3/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514Y284	6/7/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0514Z309	7/5/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515A055	8/2/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515B061	9/6/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515C077	10/4/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515D083	11/8/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515E099	12/6/2025	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515F104	1/3/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515G112	2/7/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515H129	3/7/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515I127	4/4/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515J143	5/2/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515K158	6/6/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515L166	7/4/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515M156	8/1/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515N164	9/5/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515O188	10/3/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515P193	11/7/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515Q200	12/5/2026	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515R218	1/9/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515S224	2/6/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515T232	3/6/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515U240	4/3/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515V256	5/8/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515W262	6/5/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515X278	7/3/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515Y284	8/7/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0515Z309	9/4/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516A055	10/2/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516B061	11/6/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516C077	12/4/2027	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516D083	1/8/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516E099	2/5/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516F104	3/5/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516G112	4/2/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516H129	5/7/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516I127	6/4/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516J143	7/2/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516K158	8/6/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516L166	9/3/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516M156	10/1/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516N164	11/5/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516O188	12/3/2028	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516P193	1/7/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516Q200	2/4/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516R218	3/3/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516S224	4/7/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516T232	5/5/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516U240	6/2/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516V256	7/7/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516W262	8/4/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516X278	9/1/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516Y284	10/6/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0516Z309	11/3/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517A055	12/1/2029	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517B061	1/5/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517C077	2/2/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517D083	3/2/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517E099	4/6/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517F104	5/4/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517G112	6/1/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517H129	7/6/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517I127	8/3/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517J143	9/7/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517K158	10/5/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517L166	11/2/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517M156	12/7/2030	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517N164	1/4/2031	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517O188	2/1/2031	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517P193	3/1/2031	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517Q200	4/5/2031	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517R218	5/3/2031	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517S224	6/7/2031	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517T232	7/5/2031	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517U240	8/2/2031	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517V256	9/6/2031	13.875%	6.20%
PIBD0517W262	10/4/2031	13.875%	6.20%
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Fish in Sorsogon safe – BFAR

By Christina A. Gaylican

THE LATEST TESTS CONDUCTED BY THE Bureau of Fisheries and Aquatic Resources showed that fish caught in waters off Sorsogon contained low levels of mercury and were safe for human consumption.

Belinda D. Raymundo, chief of BFAR's fish-port laboratory, said technicians examined not only water samples but also samples comprising at least 15 species of fish found in the coastal areas of Bagacay, Rizal, Buenavista and Pilotu Dist.

"The samples analyzed [had] mercury levels of 0.1 part per million and within the established limit of 0.5 part per million (ppm) and are therefore safe for human consumption," said Raymundo.

She said this was the fifth test conducted by BFAR in the area after mining effluents, including mercury, were discovered by the Australian company Lafayette on Albay's Rapu-Rapu island spilled into the sea in October last year. The previous BFAR tests showed mercury content within the allowable limits of .002 ppm for water and 0.5 ppm for fish.

Company officials maintained that Lafayette did not use mercury in its operations and that was confirmed by the DENR.

The Feb. 9 BFAR study prompted Lafayette to issue a statement that "DOH's continuing tests consistently showed that there was no mercury contamination at all."

The mercury contamination issue peaked when swimming groups sent their own fish samples to BFAR for testing without saying where the samples were taken and from.

"BFAR found the samples safe to eat. Although unscientific, this confirms what the fishermen groups [said] to scare people from eating Sorsogon fish, affecting the livelihood of their own fishermen in the province."

US soldier deported

AN AMERICAN SERVICEMAN WHO WAS DISCHARGED APRIL [illegible] without official clearance over five years ago was deported from the Philippines on Monday on his way to court-martial in the United States, the Bureau of Immigration said Monday.

Thomas Glen Jarrell, 37, was escorted by US military personnel when he left on a Continental Airlines flight to Guam. He was placed on the Bureau of Immigration blacklist to prevent his return to the Philippines.

Jarrell deserted the US military in 2000. The US armed forces issued a warrant for his arrest on Nov. 11 that year.

He had been under ill custody for over two years following his arrest in Angeles City on Jan. 14, 2004.

BI Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. said it took two years to deport Jarrell because the bureau had to wait for the American's criminal case in the Philippines to be resolved.

Jarrell was accused of forcing a 17-year-old girl into prostitution but the case was dismissed by the Angeles City court on Feb. 10.

Lalaine P. Tadena

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THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, March 1, 2006
Ash Wednesday

1st Reading: [illegible]
2nd Reading: [illegible]
Gospel: Mark 8:14-21, 31-38

Jesus said to his disciples, "Be careful not to make a show of your righteousness before people. If you do so, you do not gain anything from your Father in heaven. When you give something to the poor, do not have it announced before you, as the those who want to be seen in the synagogues and in the streets in order to be praised by the people. I assure you, they have been already paid in full.

"If you give something to the poor, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your gift remains really secret. Your Father who sees what is kept secret will reward you.

"When you pray, do not be like those who want to be seen. They love to stand and pray in the synagogues or on street corners so be seen by everyone. I assure you, they have already been paid in full. When you pray, go to your room, close the door and pray to your Father who is with you in secret; and your Father who sees what is kept secret will reward you.

"When you fast, do not put on a miserable face as do the hypocrites. They put on a gloomy face, so people can see they are fasting. I tell you this: They have been paid in full already. When you fast, wash your face and make yourself look decent, because you are not fasting for appearances or for people, but for your Father who sees beyond appearances. And your Father, who sees what is kept secret will reward you."

Commentary:

Ascendas' Ashes! It's time to come home, come back to our baptism, to our promise to live in the freedom of the children of God. It's time that God put all our losses and loss, not into our graves. And time for God to his eternal agape to convert the sin and take pity on us and all the earth. It is time for us to be ambassadors for Christ, so that God can appeal to the world through us. It is time for us to be reconciled to God and to be reconciled to one another. It is time to feel, to pray and give alms. It is time to reform our evil, our self-destruction and greed, our violence and despair, and live once again with the Most enthusiastic of our baptisms. It's the springtime of our souls—it's Lent.

(Quezon Publications Inc., 8 Malcolm St., CP 88 Sta. Mesa, Quezon City, CP 871 Sta. A, Manila, 734-1 Lemon City, Tel. 38, 733-1 Cebu, Fax 921-7262, E-mail: [illegible] Website: http://www.[illegible] Philippine Publications Inc. 1-4 City [illegible] Philippines)

Kid gloves for YOU leader? Army says he's under probe

By Cinna T. Pazolingan

THE SILVERCUP OFFICE AFFIDAVIT to be handling Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim with kid gloves.

The former Young Officers Union (YOU) leader, one of the officers who led the Honasan coup attempt against the Aquino administration in 1989, was accused by top AFP officials of planning to withdraw support from President Macapagal-Arroyo last Friday but his name was not included among those charged with being part of a supposed coup plot.

And to the chagrin of many, Lim has not said that he would be court-martialed for disloyalty.

Lim was relieved of command of the elite 1st Scout Ranger Regiment Thursday night, with the discovery of his plot to join protest rallies during the 20th anniversary commemoration of Edsa I.

He was ordered to "taken into custody" by Gen. Generoso Senga, AFP chief of staff, and then transferred to Army custody on Friday.

The two stars bear "resemblance" to quarters at Army headquarters in Fort Bonifacio.

'Nikkie'

Lim is among the retired and active AFP officers implicated in the alleged plot of communist rebels and military elements to oust the troops and take power for themselves.

An AFP briefing paper on the so-called "Final Talk 2" between the Communist Party of the Philippines and the Maoist-shooting Kawal Pilipino spoke of military forces under a certain "Nikkie" in the overall ground commanders.

"Nikkie" is believed to be Lim, according to the documents.

Lim is not among the 31 charged in connection with the alleged plot. But the others named in the documents—ex-senator and retired Air Force Lt. Gen. Jose Calida, retired Col. Jake Malasaga, retired Navy Capt. Felix Turingan, 1st Lt. Lawrence Sun Juan and lawyer Jose Christopher Belmonte—have been charged.

Asked why Lim was spared, AFP spokesperson Col. Franco Rimocul said: "The Army will come up with its separate investigation.

"The investigation is still ongoing."

To the observation that Lim was being given special treatment, Rimocul said: "That is speculation."

Meanwhile, Col. Ariel Querubin, who admitted late Sunday that he had planned to lead a large contingent in withdrawing support from the Military, police and other law enforcement of his post as 1st Marine Brigade commander.

He was sacked two days after Brig. Gen. Renato Miranda was relieved as Marine commandant.

Querubin has flown to Manuel City, the base of the 1st Marine Brigade, for today's turnover of the command to his deputy commander, Lt. Col. Lucio Marcelino.

Army chief forms elite anticoup unit in Metro

From page A1

Battalion, Mechanized Infantry Battalion and Infantry Scout Battalion—will serve as the frontline in case a military uprising breaks out in Metro Manila, according to Lt. Gen. Hermogenes Esperon.

Esperon inspected the elite troops at the Army quadrangle in Fort Bonifacio on Monday night. Conspicuous during the presentation were the armored personnel carriers.

The team is headed by Col. Arturo Ortiz, commander of the Special Forces Regional Command, retired Col. Jake Malasaga, retired Navy Capt. Felix Turingan, 1st Lt. Lawrence Sun Juan and lawyer Jose Christopher Belmonte—have been charged.

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The general said the Armed Forces leadership would decide in a few days how long the special team would remain in Fort Bonifacio.

The team is headed by Col. Arturo Ortiz, commander of the Special Forces Regional Command, retired Col. Jake Malasaga, retired Navy Capt. Felix Turingan, 1st Lt. Lawrence Sun Juan and lawyer Jose Christopher Belmonte—have been charged.

"We are contingency forces that are, as the National Capital Region Command, may deploy," Esperon said.

He said that once deployed, the troops will not be commanded by the NCRCom under its Gen. Alan Cabahug.

"My job is to keep [the troops] intact and prepare them for the jobs that they are expected to do," Esperon said.

The NCRCom is mainly in charge of securing the capital. It was reactivated in response to the July 27, 2003, mutiny at the Oakwood Premier apartments in Makati involving some 300 junior officers and men.

In case of violence

Ortiz's contingent said the Army chief had given instructions for the troops to quell any uprising.

"When there is violence, we should have a force that is ready to counter contingency forces of the [enemy] so that we can respond to any contingency or threat in Fort Bonifacio and in Metro Manila," he said.

Like the Marine Corps, the special team will be based in Fort Bonifacio.

Asked if there was still unrest in the military, AFP spokesperson Col. Ernesto Rimon said: "We're not expecting anything, but we should not take anything lightly."

He said the creation of the special team was "in an effort of prevention."

Esperon said the inspection was part of checking "the compatibilities of our men and to give instructions for the night."

Full alert again

Both Ortiz and Querubin belong to the elder circle of graduates of the Medal of Valor, the military's highest combat award.

The Philippine National Police downgraded its alert status to Alpha Minus to heightened alert yesterday morning, with some quarters upgrading to base-gained doors.

But Interior Sec. Felipe Rojas, intelligence chief of the NCR police, said the level was again raised to full alert in order to contain possible mass actions resulting from tensions in the House regarding the arrest of party-list lawmakers. (See story on Page A11.)

But officials refused to speculate on the level of the threat, if any, to Metro Manila or to the national government.

"One, there is no rally. Another, the Marines have stood down," Rojas told reporters while [illegible] explaining the reasons behind the lowering of the security alert.

"I also want to give my own opinion so they can have a breathing space[?]," he said.

Metro Manila had been on full alert during the last 14 days, with groups seeking the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo taking to the streets. On Friday, shortly after the President declared a state of national emergency, thousands marched on Edsa dismantling her campaign rallies.

Quezon, head of the Metro Manila police, says home on Sunday about 1,000 anti-riot cops who augmented the forces in the capital last week.

About 15,000 antiriot cops reportedly were deployed in Metro Manila on Monday.

"I can deal with the situation even with [the lengthened] alert level, should there be any threat," Quezon said, adding that the military's NCRCom would be quickly called to lend a hand if needed.

No longer a fortress

Even Malacañang has ceased to be a fortress, easing up on its security and opening its gates after exacting tests for the past five days.

Container vans that were used as bar entry through the gates at J.P. Laurel, Mendiola, Arlegui and San Miguel streets were taken away early yesterday.

But members of the Presidential Security Group continued to ensure visibility going to and coming from the Palace compound.

PSG guards, bearing heavy arms, also continued to man security outposts installed at San Rafael Street and in the gate to Kalayaan Hall.

Tensely sustained fight at Kalayaan Hall with PSG guards, their numbers increased since last week, inspecting the belongings of those coming in and leaving.

"We are still on red alert," PSG chief Gen. Duane Pasco told in a phone interview. "And to be on red alert means that PSG guards are required 100 percent to be present at their stations."

Sangit said the decision to increase the combat state was a "tactical" one. He refused to elaborate beyond saying that it needed perhaps "help define the tension of civilians using the roads in Malacañang."

Press office

The use of the press office at Kalayaan Hall remained limited, with reporters allowed to stay there only until 10 p.m.

But this was an improvement because since Friday reporters had been told to leave the press office at 6 p.m. and transfer to the fringes of Gate House and Gate 4 monument.

Since Feb. 17, reporters also had to wait for clearance to enter the Malacañan press office, but yesterday, they were allowed entry even without it (Sorcero).

The ban on media people at the Palace was imposed a few days before Feb. 24, when the Presidential declared a state of national emergency.

The other day, Ordinez Secretary Avelino Cruz said the government was "relaxing" the ban because it was able to prevent two alleged plots against the administration from being hatched.

There were "Alphas" backlit," an alleged plot to bomb certain places, surfacing the 19th during the planned bonanza-making, and the supposed plan of some members of the Scout Rangers and the Marines to join the protest rallies.

With reports from Luige A. del Puerto and Christine O. Avendaño

Economic team told . . .

From page A1

The economic team led by Ibrez resisted the proclamation lifted as soon as possible, but Defense Secretary Avelino J. Cruz Jr. said the economic team deferred to the decision of the security cluster to keep the proclamation for the meantime.

Cruz said that while the suspense was already "over the hump," the security cluster and economic team had decided to assess the political situation on a daily basis to see if the proclamation could be lifted.

On the sidelines of the "Roxas Circle of Hope" conference at the Manila Peninsula, Cruz said that as long as the "whereabouts" declared in PP 1017 were present, it would remain in force. (See related story on Page A4.)

At the briefing on Monday night, the security cluster spoke of eyewitness accounts that said that members of the extreme left had continued to reach base with officers of the military, according to Teodoro Locsin Jr., Roxas's chief of staff.

"The way I understood it from there, that's the cause of major concern," Ibrez said.

(Sen. Rep. Joey Salceda is, nevertheless, pushing for the immediate lifting of PP 1017 to "counteract the unintended consequences" of the proclamation, particularly the signaling impact on the intellectual investors."

"The only way to counter them is to lift it. The President actually wants a quick return to normalcy so it provides more fertile ground to participate in the process," Salceda, in his calculation, a good economy is her best protection, "Salceda said in a text message.

"If there is no more rain, the dams are nearly one-meter overflow."

Perlas said the security clamdown was aware of the fact caused by the issue of national emergency on the business climate.

Briefing for business groups

To minimize the impact of the security clamdown, Ibrez said they would hold meetings this week with business groups, including the Makati Business Club (MBC) whose leaders had been critical of the Arroyo administration.

"It's a lack of understanding on the part of some, which has led to fears of possible takeover of utilities. We've kept in touch with businessmen to tell them that these are unfounded," Ibrez said.

The head of the Employers Confederation of the Philippines (Ecop) said foreigners had become reluctant to invest in the country and Ibrez with foreign equity was inclined to put on hold expansion plans because of the state of emergency.

Ecop president Peter Y. Ibrez called for a periodic assessment of the state of national emergency.

Thumbs up

While Ecop is uneasy over the proclamation, a foreign bank has given thumbs up to the Arroyo's swift moves to quash an alleged coup plot.

"We believe the risk of a coup and political crisis in the near term has declined [as] demonstrated since Friday and this should boost sentiment in financial markets in the next one to two weeks," said Credit Suisse in the Tuesday edition of its Philippine daily report.

Credit Suisse based its assessment on the failure of the alleged coup plotters to generate mass support.

"We noticed hardly any large rallies or gatherings in Manila. One thing to note from this weekend's events is that the population did not show any significant signs of supporting a coup or ousting of President Arroyo," Credit Suisse said.

It expected the President to lift the proclamation "probably in the next few weeks."

In contrast to the broad support given by the proclamation among Filipino investors and media outlets, Credit Suisse found the document "quite eyebrow."

"The President does have the right to impose a state of emergency through a presidential decree so no 'impropriety on this count' has taken place," Credit Suisse said.

Strike

At the Department of Labor and Employment, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas assured fears that the state of emergency would curtail the rights and freedoms enjoyed by the labor sector.

"I don't think the declaration can put the hold the exercise of workers and union rights that are provided for by the Constitution," Sto. Tomas told reporters.

The secretary, however, said she had yet to ask Malacañang about the implication of the declaration on strikes.

Sto. Tomas noted that on Saturday, members of a transport group in Cavite went on strike because of a labor dispute. The strike, she said, was neither dispersed nor was it expanded as a reflection of the ban on rallies imposed by PP 1017. With reports from Norman Bordadora and Jerome Aning

Congress unites behind 5 solons linked . . .

From page A1

without a fight."

"In short, all the emergency authority the Constitution grants for this [the former] may yet be pulled to the front under the lash of necessity," he said in remarks he prepared for delivery before the joint session of Congress.

"Including some of supposing is admirable rights, weakening free institutions and ultimately destroying democracy," said Lozada, a member of the PDP-Laban party, which is part of the administration coalition.

Divide and rule

Agusan del Sur Rep. Rodolfo Plaza of the Nationalist People's Coalition said the chamber might as well "abolish" itself if it could not defend its members from the "[g]rave and evil" party being employed by Palace agents.

"My dear colleagues, it has been said that similar when an exchanges rule by brute will take by force," said Plaza. That because the President has lost the moral authority to govern, she has issued signs of supporting a coup or ousting of President Arroyo," Credit Suisse said.

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Waiver signed

The chamber unanimously adopted Resolution No. 1109 sponsored by Iloilo Rep. Ruben Ingles which seeks to "amend the [the lawmakers] the right to a preliminary investigation and, pending prosecution thereof, that they be given permanent custody of their liberty."

His counterparts after Deampo and the other three party-list lawmakers signed a document waiving their right to press charges of arbitrary detention if they eventually are taken into police custody.

The signing of the waiver paved the way for a preliminary investigation, which could take place as early as today.

No more inquest

"There will be no request any more and no arrest without warrant," Ocampo said.

Ocampo and the four other lawmakers—party-list Representatives Ocampo, Rafael Mariano, Teddy Casiño, Liza Maza at Colmenares and Joel Virador—are in the preventive custody of De Venecia and other House leaders.

Earlier yesterday, Inspectors of Justice prosecutors formally filed in a Makati court rebellion charges against Analgesia Representative Crispin Beltran and rebel Lts. Lawrence San Juan.

A prosecution panel headed by Senior Asst. Prosecutor Manuel Velasco recommended no bail for Beltran and San Juan, who are now in police custody.

Velasco, in resolution of the panel, ordered both to show cause their responsibility (San Juan) and (Beltran) are the leaders/promoters of rebellion," A See page A10 for resolution said.

The panel endorsed the conduct of a preliminary investigation against 43 others who had been implicated by the Philippine National Police in the alleged coup plot.

The 11 include, among others, communist leader Jose Maria Sison, Ocampo, Mariano, Casiño, Maza, Virador, former Sen. Rogelio Sherman and retired Gen. Jake Malaquiras and Felix Turingan.

DOJ efforts to speed up the filing of formal charges against Ocampo, Mariano, Casiño, Maza and Virador suffered a hitch when the five refused to be subjected to inquest proceedings.

Ocampo of Bayan Muna demanded that a preliminary investigation be conducted instead by the panel as agreed upon, he said, between De Venecia and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

Upon the request of one chief legal counsel, Romeo Capulong, we have refused to be subjected to inquest proceedings being headed by Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño," said Ocampo.

Legal shortcut

He told reporters that an "inquest cannot be done because we have not been arrested."

Zuño had earlier requested House Sergeant at Arms Bernal Beck to present the lawmakers for inquest.

But Beck said he could not hold detainees up for an hour inside the adjacent Metro Building in the Batasan complex.

Mariano accused the Arroyo administration of carting short legal processes.

"Pero Mariano, who sent us to jail, and our hands and gagged our lips failed to silence the people's struggle," said Mariano.

The lawmakers maintained that only the courts could issue valid warrants of arrest. With a report from Marvin Sy in Quezon city

'Wanted' solons prefer cold floor to warm hotel beds

From page A1

inside the Batasang Pambansa.

"It's all right, all of us are used to sleeping on the floor," Rep. Teodoro Casiño said yesterday, recounting how it felt to sleep in a conference room above the House session hall after Speaker Jose de Venecia gave them sanctuary.

Casiño's "roommates" were fellow Bayan Muna lawmakers Satur Ocampo—a former communist guerrilla leader used to living in the hills—and Joel Virador, Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano and Gabriela Rep. Liza Maza.

Along with Rep. Crispin Beltran, who is detained in Camp Crame, and 10 other people, the four lawmakers are accused by the police of being involved in a plot to overthrow President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Better than at Rembrandt

De Venecia offered to place the lawmakers under his custody pending the outcome of a joint legislative investigation into the allegations against them.

Casiño said sleeping at the House made it easier to summon by him and his colleagues to participate in their legislative functions as they would no longer have to travel to go to their offices.

He said he lived in and Majority Leader Prospero Nograles offered him the presidential suite in the Sofitel Hotel in Pasay City.

"But rather than be holed up in a hotel, we'd rather stay at the House compound so we can exercise our functions as congressmen," Casiño said the lawmakers.

At their own risk

Casiño said that although he and his colleagues were under House custody, they were not being restricted and could come and go as they please, but at their own risk.

"The [police] gave us the plans, also dinner and breakfast. So for the buildings and the surveillance, each of us provided for himself or herself," Casiño said.

Lights on

Casiño, Mariano and Maza used sleeping bags and mats spread on the floor. Maza and Ocampo slept on separate couches.

Casiño said he and his colleagues might have slept better were it not for the lights that were on 24 hours off the lights.

"They couldn't press [us] where the switches are. So we slept with the lights on. Our sleep was interrupted every once in a while," he said.

"It was also rather cold. It seems that the only setting of the air conditioning in the House is high-cool."

Round 2

"I slept well," said Ocampo who, as a political prisoner during the Marcos dictatorship in the 1970s, spent many nights in solitary and dark detention centers.

Ocampo joked that the caregiver among them, Casiño, had brought along his toilet.

"Seriously, [at 18cm] still not used to it," said Ocampo.

Mariano, who turned 53 Ocampo quipped, compares his living under House custody to serving a "detention."

He said he entered his graduate degree when the Marcos dictatorship declared martial law and pursued his from 1976 to 1981, and his post-graduate degree when the Aquino administration declared law from 1986 to 1992.

The only rose

Maza said she slept curled up on a sofa and read a book until 2:30 a.m.

"The lights were not my problem. Since I was the only woman in the group and we were to just one bed, I was rather self-conscious," she said.

Maza said she had brought an extra personal inside mat guard.

"I woke up at 6 a.m. That was a rather short sleep," Maza said.

Mercury Drug Operation Bigay Lunas: The People's Clinic

In 1999, Mercury Drug, together with its business partners and the local government units, carried out an activity that aims to reach the most number of its less fortunate patrons and in its own small way give them the gift of wellness as token of the company's sincere appreciation. Thus, the Operation Bigay Lunas was launched.

The Operation Bigay Lunas is a simultaneous, one-day free clinic that provides free medical consultations and medicines to indigents nationwide. Now on its 8th year, the Operation Bigay Lunas has provided healthcare services to at least one million indigents nationwide. The Operation Bigay Lunas is also made possible by contributions of time from more than one thousand two hundred volunteer doctors and non-medical volunteers.

Mercury Drug's partnership with the local government units and its business partners allowed patients to receive treatment and alleviate the chances for their sickness to lead to more serious illnesses and even hospitalization for conditions that could have been prevented had the patient received preventive care and early treatment.

In addition to this, the Operation Bigay Lunas held every March 1st serves as tribute to Mercury Drug's anniversary as a means of giving back to the community for the continued trust and patronage it has extended to Mercury Drug.

Once again, as the company marks its 81st anniversary today, Operation Bigay Lunas, through the cooperation of the respective provincial governors, city and municipality mayors, is here to serve the community in 67 cities across the country.

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Makati City
Malabon City
Mandaluyong City
Manila
- Tondo
- Sta. Cruz

Marikina City
Muntinlupa City
Navotas
Parañaque City
Pasay City
Pasig City
Pateños
Quezon City
- Brgy. Commonwealth
- Brgy. Gulod, Novaliches
- Brgy. Bagumbayan, Cubao

San Juan
Taguig
Valenzuela

Luzon
Antipolo City
Binangonan
Cainta
Rodriguez
San Mateo
Taytay
Bulacan
- Hagonoy
- Bocaue
- Meycauayan
- Malolos
- Plaridel

Cavite
- Dasmariñas
- Naic
- Bacoor
- Imus
- Tanza
- Trece Martirez

Laguna
- Biñan
- San Pedro
- Los Baños
- Calamba

La Union
Lucena City
Dagupan City
Ilagan City
Tarlac City
Cabanatuan City
Angeles City
Zambales
Lipa City
Camarines Norte
Naga City
Legaspi City
Puerto Princesa City

Visayas
Cebu City
San Jose, Antique
Tacloban City
Saint Bernard, Leyte
(Special Operation Bigay Lunas)

Mindanao
Tagum City
General Santos City
Cagayan de Oro City
Iligan City

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- Solvang
- Philusa Corporation
- Medical Center Trading Corp.
- Nestle Philippines
- Unilever
- Colgate
- San Miguel Corporation

Int'l group seeks halt to media crackdown

Front page 1 ▸

director Ann Cooper condemned Saturday's police raid on The Daily Tribune and a government threat to take over media's political foes.

"Your administration's tactics—raiding a newspaper, rendering troops in front of television and radio cameras, and threatening to issue government ownership guidelines—jeopardize the democratic advances of the last 20 years," the CPJ said.

Deeply disturbing

"It's deeply disturbing to see political unrest threaten the precious and deeply held concept of press freedom and democracy," the media watchdog said.

Police confiscated documents and posted men at the door of the Tribune's office, but the paper has continued to publish.

"We ask you to reverse the steps you have taken to control the media and give them reassurances that they will be allowed to continue their work without fear in the future," the CPJ said.

The regulatory National Telecommunications Commission warned media groups on Friday against broadcasting calls for the removal of the troops by force.

Broadcasters were asked to remain classified as they would not inadvertently provide "aid or support" to those calling for the ouster of the President, a presidential aide said.

But the country's biggest broadcasters, ABS-CBN, has pledged more than it will not practice self-censorship.

Since the fall of Marcos, the Philippine media have developed into one of the most vibrant in Asia.

Cebu newspapers

In Cebu, five daily newspapers issued a statement saying that the government could not impose prior restraint on media, pointing out that the emergency proclamation "did not suspend the constitutional right to liberty of expression."

The newspapers were Sun. Star Cebu, Cebu Daily News, The Freeman, Sun Star Bugsay Balita and Bisaya News. The editors of these papers are Fechico A. Suarez, Eileen G. Mangubat, Jerry Tuazon and Jacinto S. Jubac. Among the newspapers' senior columnists are Jose L. Mercado of the Philippine Daily Inquirer and broadcaster Bobby Nuñez of dyRS and DWAT.

Drilon said that even in the harshest power that the President and Commander in Chief can wield under the Constitution, the rights to free speech and expression were not suspended.

"You cannot invoke any power under the state of national emergency which can justify curtailing the media," he said.

"Certainly, it is not for the police to determine what standards media should follow, that is totally unacceptable, blatantly illegal, blatantly unconstitutional," he added.

Drilon said a declaration of martial law did not suspend the operation of the Constitution or the rights it guarantees.

Basic liberties not suspended

"So, it's very clear under our Constitution that it must be based on authority of the declaration of martial law does not even result in the suspension of basic rights. How much more a declaration that we are now in a state of national emergency?" he said.

Drilon said that the Supreme Court had several decisions affirming that a state of rebellion did not result in the suspension of basic liberties "such as the freedom of the press."

He said that Presidential Proclamation No. 1017 was just a mere description that the country was in a state of emergency but it did not give her any new powers.

"[That] it would appear that it has metamorphosed into an emergency rule. From a declaration of a state of emergency they have what looks like emergency rule—warrantless arrests being affected, raids on newspapers, the Tribune particularly and the PEP saying now [that media will] have to conform to certain standards," Drilon said.

Chilling effect

"And you have armed elements of the government in TV stations. Wow," Drilon said.

"What were otherwise declarations of state of the nation which is the state of national emergency has metamorphosed into what looks like an emergency rule."

He said PP 1017 had its "chilling effect and the state has taken advantage of this chilling effect."

"They have, without any regard to the freedom of the people, suppressed or are trying to suppress freedom of expression, freedom of speech with what they have done on media," he said.

Philip C. Salaya, AP, AFP

Susan hits inclusion in list of conspirators

SUSAN ROCES ON MONDAY night lashed out at the government for including her in the list of "conspirators" who supposedly plotted to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo last week.

"In my entire life it's only now that I've been called a conspirator," Roces said, referring to the Malacañang document that said her declaration to join the protest march at 6:00 on Feb. 24 was part of a conspiracy against the President.

The label apparently did not stop her from attending the sentimental dinner for Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay himself another suspected "conspirator" in the supposed plot against Ms Arroyo.

"Sani na lang kung sino man ang gusto sa amin sa, we are not afraid. Come and get us," Binay, a former human rights lawyer who defended victims of martial law, said in his speech marking his 20th year in public service.

Fe Zamora

ROCES

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Printer Function						✦	✦
Scanner Function						✦	
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UP students, teachers walk out vs 1017

Front page 1 ▸

of Order in the Philippines (CIC-CP) and the Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR), said the proclamation was oppressive and unconstitutional.

In the Senate, Senator Ralph Recto and Pia Cayetano urged Ms Arroyo to immediately revoke her proclamation, saying that it had led to abuses and created jitters among the business community.

As the protests remained afflame in demonstrations, UP students and teachers assembled at Quezon Hall in front of the Oblation statue, where they condemned Ms Arroyo's declaration of a state of national emergency.

Refuge

Numbering in the hundreds, the demonstrators declared the university a "refuge" for political dissenters in the face of the government's crackdown on protesters and the media critical of the Arroyo administration.

The University Council of the Diliman campus issued a resolution challenging PP 1017 and accusing the Arroyo it gassed to PH. Iglesia' constitutional and human rights.

The declaration said UP Diliman "is a refuge for those who are subjected to political arrests and other forms of harassment."

It also "remains an open space for public debate consistent with its historical roles of academic freedom" and "challenges every move to clamp down on any of our basic freedoms."

"A university in a democracy draws its life from an environment of political freedom," the declaration read.

"Those of its kind. Functions—the quest for truth, the encouragement of critical inquiry, the stimulation of the imagination—is possible in a climate of repression," it added.

UP Prof. Randy David earlier denied the UP community is averse to a "climate of protest" in the form of academic freedom and civil liberties.

In response, "civil disobedience" has been in full play at UP for the past few days, with members of the academic community declaring this "Philippine Republic is now of emergency law cases."

"In the coming days, we will convene classrooms into centers of discussion about what is going on in society," David said.

UP president takes stand

UP president Emerlinda Roman herself has issued a statement affirming the university's commitment to the rights of its constituents in held rallies, forums and demonstrations.

"The lifeline of any university is freedom. If you're not free, you have no business finding the truth. This is the reason academic freedom is enshrined in any university," David said on Monday.

The sociology professor and business economist said UP should once again take the lead in fighting all threats to free thought and democracy amid the government crackdown on dissenters.

David also called on other schools to hold protest rallies and demonstrations on their own campuses and PP 1017 was lifted.

In the meantime, the police and military should not be allowed to intrude on campus grounds to preserve university autonomy, according to history Prof. Maria Serena Diokno.

At the press conference of Church groups, the Catholic Bishop Conference of the Philippines said Ms Arroyo should be held accountable for all forms of violations she committed against the people.

Also at the press conference were representatives of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente, Ecumenical Bishops Forum and the United Methodist Church.

Rev. Leo Dacanday, secretary general of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines, urged the public to join street protests against the proclamation.

In a statement, the Iglesia Filipina Independiente called on Ms Arroyo to withdraw PP 1017 so the "soonest possible time and respect the inherent rights of our people to live in freedom."

"We also reiterate our appeal for her to take the patriotic duty to step down from the presidency to spare our country from the agony of further division and division and to give way for the establishment of a democratic government that can truly serve and represent our people," it said.

Tony Boyod of the PCPR said measures like PP 1017 could not stop the "people's quest for truth and justice amid the illegitimacy and all-around bankruptcy of the Arroyo government."

Bishop Isaias Bligoto of the UCCP said the presidential proclamation was an admission on the part of Ms Arroyo of a "flawed political and economic governance and the failure of democracy" under her leadership. With reports from Akiko Sujio, Philip C. Salaya and AFP

The WORLD

Lira Lorraine S. Gasco

Thaksin defies protest threat, won't quit

BANGKOK—THAI PRIME MINISTER THAKSIN Shinawatra defied threats of street marches by foes who demand he quit, but said he was willing to accept any democratic way out of a growing crisis proposed by the political opposition.

SHINAWATRA

"The protesters are exerting such rule over the rule of law, which I can't accept," Thaksin told reporters after a lunch with the army navy air force and police chiefs.

"I am happy to cooperate on anything, just tell me, as long as they are democratic ways," Thaksin said, echoing other the three opposition parties declared a boycott of an April 2 snap election he called to resolve the crisis.

Thaksin said a cabinet meeting earlier he was willing to postpone the election if that were proposed by the opposition, two ministers said.

But the opposition parties said they had decided on a boycott because a fair election was impossible without political reforms as Thaksin controlled political institutions resigned to be independent.

Leaders of a campaign to oust Thaksin for alleged abuse of power and corruption demanded he resign by Sunday or face marches through the streets of Bangkok, a move that could spark violence.

The People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD), a coalition of many parliamentary groups, said he would face the "people's power" if he ignored the ultimatum.

"March 1 will be the day of reckoning," Somkiti Limthongthol, a media tycoon who began the campaign to oust his former business ally in September, said protesters in the early hours of Tuesday.

"We will march peacefully until the morning of the 6th to show our pure intentions to request Thaksin to resign," Somkiti told the crowd.

The boycott stranded financial markets, which had shown signs of recovery on Monday with investors hoping the election would provide a way out of the crisis.

As the benchmark, the main Thai stock index, added final stats 1.5 percent on Monday, was down 0.31 percent. Economists say the campaign to oust Thaksin could scare foreign investors away from planned long-term infrastructure projects and an economic growth.

A rally in the capital last Sunday attracted the biggest anti-government crowd in 14 years, peaking at 50,000. Monday night's gathering drew half that number.

But monks and many of the Dhamma Army (Army of the teaching of Buddha"), were scrapping the rally ground and vowing to stay until Sunday's planned demonstration. Reuters

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China blasts scrapping of Taiwan unification body

BEIJING/TAIPEI—CHINA CONDEMNED Taiwan President Chen Shui-bian on Tuesday for scrapping a council on eventual unification, calling it a provocation creating further unrest in one of Asia's most dangerous flashpoints.

But the statement from the Communist Party's Central Office for Taiwan Affairs said the cabinet's Taiwan Affairs Office stopped short of threatening war against the self-ruled island, which Beijing has vowed to attack if it formally declares statehood.

On Monday, Chen declared an end to the National Unification Council and its 17-year-old unification guidelines, defying warnings from Beijing and Washington, the island's main arms supplier and trading partner.

The move by Taiwan's hawkish president outraged the ruling China Communist Party. Taipei newspapers said it could be the first of many to bolster Chen's claim to be the leader of the island's pro-independence movement.

"The further escalation of secessionist activities will no doubt stoke tensions and trigger a serious crisis in the Straits," Beijing's mouthpiece China Daily said in an editorial.

While new years in ties to his second four-year term, Chen appears to have given up hope of reconciling with a China that refuses to deal with him directly and insists it is focusing on his original independence-minded supporters.

"Having achieved little during the past six years in office and with only two more to go, Chen has now begun to create a legacy as the political leader of [the] Taiwan independence movement," Taiwan's China Post said in an editorial.

Democratic Taiwan has governed itself since its split from the mainland at the end of the Chinese civil war in 1949.

China's joint statement, carried by the official Xinhua news agency, said Beijing opposed independence but was committed to peaceful unification. It pledged to boost personnel, economic and cultural exchanges as well as work for direct trade and transport links—banned by Taiwan for decades due to security fears.

"Our most urgent task now is to resolutely oppose and prevent Chen Shui-bian from engaging in the [pro-Taiwan independence] activities through 'constitutional changes'," the statement said.

The statement singled out Chen and did not include Taiwan or China's Democratic Progressive Party, leaving room for reassurances in the future.

Defending his decision, Chen said in a speech marking the island's Peace Memorial Day on Tuesday that he had custody of Taiwan people to let their voice reach Beijing. Reuters

VOLCANOLOGISTS work at an excavation site north of the crater of Mount Tambora in Indonesia. AP

Scientists find lost Indonesian civilization buried by volcano

SUMBAWANEWS, 04/05/05: Indonesian—American have found what they believe are traces of the lost Indonesian civilization of Tambora, which was wiped out in 1815 by the biggest volcanic eruption in recorded history.

Mount Tambora's catastrophic eruption on April 10, 1815, buried the inhabitants of Sumbawa Island under scorching ash, gas and rock and is blamed for an estimated 60,000 deaths. The eruption was at least four times more powerful than Mount Krakatoa in 1883.

Guided by ground-penetrating radar researchers from the University of North Carolina at Pillsborough and the Indonesian Directorate of Volcanology recently dug to a gully where fossils had found artifacts and bones. They unearthed the remains of a Dutch house, pottery, bronze and the embedded bones of two people, all in a layer of sediment dating to the eruption.

University of Rhode Island volcanologist Haraldur Sigurdsson, the leader of the expedition, estimated that 10,000 people lived in the town when the volcano erupted in a blast that dwarfed the one that buried the Roman town of Pompeii.

The eruption shot 360 million metric tons of sulfuric gases into the atmosphere, causing global cooling and creating what historians call "The Year Without a Summer" during in Europe suffered crop-killing frosts in June, July and August. In France and Switzerland, grape and corn crops died, as the harvests were delayed.

The excavations on Sumbawa Island has intrigued researchers ever since Dutch and British explorers visited in the early 1800s and were surprised to hear a language that did not sound like any other spoken in Indonesia. Hypotheses range from scholars believe the language more closely resembles those spoken in Indochina. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Bombs kill 10 in Baghdad

BAGHDAD — Three bombs hit Baghdad on Tuesday, and police said one of them killed at least 10 people. The bombs exploded as former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was expected to return to court for the resumption of his trial. Earlier, bombs exploded at the shrine Saddam built over his father's grave in his hometown of Tikrit north of Baghdad, police and local officials said. The bombing of a Shi'ite shrine last month plunged Iraq into its greatest crisis, setting off sectarian violence that killed at least 200 people. Reuters

France starts vaccination program

PARIS — French authorities began a limited vaccination programme of ducks and geese against bird flu Monday, as the lethal H5N1 strain made further inroads in Africa and international experts met in Paris to discuss ways of fighting the epidemic. Health officials in the southwest French department of the Landes started the inoculation of flocks of fat-de-extended five provinces of farm-grain. In an operation that was expected to take several weeks. Geese on a farm at the village of Classun were the first to receive an injection in the neck containing a vaccine based on the related H5N2 virus. Breeder ducks are reported after four weeks. AFP

Saddam ends hunger strike

BAGHDAD — Saddam Hussein has ended a hunger strike he began earlier this month to protest against the conduct of his trial, his chief lawyer said on Monday a day before the ousted Iraqi leader is due back in court. Defence chief lawyer Khalil al-Dhuleimi said Saddam's defense team would attend Tuesday's session after staging a boycott. "The president maintained his hunger strike for 11 days but was forced to end it for health reasons," chief defence attorney Khalil Dulaimi, after last Saddam the court hours in Baghdad on Sunday, told Reuters. Reuters

Lawmakers challenge Dubai ports deal

WASHINGTON — US lawmakers pressed ahead with efforts on Monday to reverse the controversial deal which would see a Dubai-owned firm company would run key American port operations, even after the White House agreed to a deeper security review of the deal. A congressional hearing that the Coast Guard warned last year that it could not be sure whether the company, Dubai Ports World, might support terrorism. Some lawmakers seized on the disclosure, as evidence that efforts to skew or stop the transaction on national security grounds. Reuters

Iran expanding uranium enrichment – UN

VIENNA, IRAN IS FORGING AHEAD with a nuclear fuel enrichment program in defiance of world pressure and overstepping UN probes rejected by them, it secretly wrote atomic weapons, a UN watchdog report said on Monday.

The report by International Atomic Energy Agency director Mohamed ElBaradei was circulated to IAEA board members before they meet on March 6 to discuss it. The report will be forwarded to the UN Security Council, which could consider sanctions.

"It is regrettable and a matter of concern that the uncertainties related to the scope and nature of Iran's nuclear programme have not been clarified after three years of intensive agency verification," said the report, obtained by Reuters.

"We are not yet in the point to be able to conclude that this is a (peaceful nuclear program)," said a senior official familiar with IAEA investigations, who asked not to be named.

The report said Iran had begun uncontaminating a cascade of 29 centrifuges—machines that purify uranium UF6 gas into fuel or suitable for nuclear power plants or, if enriched to high levels, for bombs—at its Natanz pilot enrichment plant.

Iran had also begun substantial reconversion of Natanz's cyclone handling 370 IAEA monitoring had been required by Iran's removal of agency safeguards seals from centrifuge related raw materials and components, the report said.

Tehran had further told the IAEA it would start installing the first 3,000 of a planned 50,000 centrifuges in the fourth quarter of 2006, the 11 page report went on.

Some 3,000 centrifuges of the type Iran has at Natanz working nonstop for a year would produce 25 kg of highly enriched uranium (HEU) needed for one atomic warhead, nuclear analysts say.

Iran's moves ended a 2 1/2-year restraint on uranium agreed during three collapsed talks with EU powers which had offered incentives if it curbed its nuclear ambitions, and spurred the IAEA board to report Tehran to the Security Council on Feb 4.

"Ultimately Iran now regretful Iran's intention to go beyond so-called R&D (research and development) and begin installing centrifuges in a full-scale uranium facility. That's a significant escalation," said a senior Western diplomat.

"Today's report underscores the board's decision to report Iran to the Security Council since it validates ... international concern in the peaceful nature of its program.

"It shows how Iran in the face of growing international concern continues to collaborate with its clandestine network to produce material necessary for nuclear weapons," the diplomat added.

Iran denies seeking nuclear arms, saying its atomic energy programme aims solely to generate electricity. But it has clashed for 18 years with the IAEA over Tehran's refusal until 2003 to disclose its nuclear activities, making Western suspicions. Reuters

" Statistically the largest single purchase you make in your life would be your house, why not get the best lock to go with it..."

SCHLAGE.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

OPINION

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Diminishing space

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-ARROYO SHOULD GIVE Rep. Imee Marcos and Sen. Jinggoy Estrada a medal. Every time public passions run high, the outrage begins to deflate the moment the two of them appear on the scene. They are living antidotes to People Power.

Of course, it is not only the targets of People Power who have helped to defang it. The mixed-record and other issues perplexed by a beleaguered administration make any manifestation of People Power impossible. An essential safety valve has thus been here-that-off.

EDITORIAL

People Power, here anyone forget, gave birth to our present democracy. It is enshrined in the present Constitution, and it is manifestation of a historical tradition as old as the Katipunan itself: the right of a people to exercise their sovereignty in the streets if need be. Persuading they are irritated enough to make their feelings known, Filipinos have a tendency to want to express their feelings peacefully, if noisily.

The result? Two days ago, in a privilege speech, Representative Loretta Ann Rosales made a sobering observation: "Indeed, no matter how firmly seated though few her political foes, President Arroyo can never seem to govern more than a rare indifference behind her while she has only the military to protect her in front. The real danger, which others might call the golden opportunity, is that, absent people power, the military will be the only arbiter of her fate and no democracy."

We leave to the Supreme Court the determination of whether the President is acting within the bounds of her authority. However we cannot be silent in the face of how, in the absence of clear rules and regulations to keep its actions within acceptable bounds, the administration is clearly trying to push the envelope, as far as reenforcing the democratic space is concerned. Repression is not merely an instrument of last resort; it's invocation is often the death-knell not only of democracy but of any government that employs it. It proclaims that the nation must undergo some kind of repression in order to keep it free; easy not be outright tyranny, but it is the bugle call from the armed camp of those with a tyrannical state of mind.

Diminishing the democratic space can only lead, as it is leading, to a national fit of claustrophobia, leading to panic and terror.

How can the fears be made to abate, the pressure reduced, the hardening of positions prevented? If a nation of consensus exists, it is along the lines that the question of legitimacy must be addressed. Not set aside, or ignored, or stamped out.

The President claims she's supported by a "silent majority." She is quick to point to local governments as the enthusiastic bulwarks of her support. She denounces all those questioning her legitimacy as representing an intolerable defiance of the public will, as repudiated in the last elections. If this is the case, she should consider throwing herself at the mercy of the people. Then she can mobilize her supposed bastions of support.

After the impeachment process failed—not on the merits of the accusations, but rather due to the loyalty of her political allies—it seems clear that the public continues to insist on some kind of demonstration of the legitimacy of her presidency. She should find a way to satisfy this wish. After all, a democratic leader is accountable not only to the majority, imagined or otherwise, in her camp; she is also accountable to the minority who deserve to have their concerns addressed.

In a last-ditch effort to preserve the democratic space, all sort of proposals are being put forward. One proposal is a "built-in amendment," casting short the President's term, which, if approved by Congress, requires a plebiscite. That plebiscite would serve as a referendum on Ms Arroyo. It would not prevent, after that question is resolved, further efforts directed at Charter change. Another proposal is simply to throw the question of lasting the President: continue holding office directly to the people. Such a plebiscite would ask the Filipino people to state whether they want her to remain in office or not.

Is the President's boast all bluff? Or is she afraid to hear the real voice of the people? Or would she prefer to continue pursuing the reckless road she has taken, the personal stone of conflict our country is in?

Journalists hit gov't assault on press freedom

PLARIDEL, THE ASSOCIATION OF BULACAN JOURNALISTS, has issued a statement criticizing the assault on freedom of the press, speech and expression brought about by President Macapagal-Arroyo's Proclamation No. 1017 declaring a "state of national emergency." The proclamation was subsequently followed by a police raid on the offices of the opposition newspaper The Daily Tribune and the arrest of editorial personalities.

"Civil liberties are irreparably impaired without press freedom," the statement said. "[Yet] a free press is the people's defense against deception, intimidation, and subjugation from forces inimical to their welfare."

Here is the complete text of that statement:

It's a tenacity in our history that we have to argue the inviolability of the freedom of speech and expression, fondlessly known as the Freedom of the Press, in a free, democratic, and open society.

In the 19th century, Jose Rizal, Marcelo H. del Pilar (Plaridel), Graciano Lopez-Jaena, and other illustrious Filipinos spread revolution for the Propaganda Movement, published La Solidaridad, fought as writers, forebears of journalists, for Filipino freedom. Inherent in the struggle is the freedom of the press.

In the 12 years of martial rule, Filipinos journalists, along with the human rights activists, again lived it, while those who remained in the country did so clandestinely—at varied risks.

Today, Proclamation 1017 patently stifles journalists through censorship and in doing so humiliates us with the backtrack history of a democratic nation.

The government's imposition of "tenderness," intimidating actors to media into taking the "guidelines" bears grave threat, is without precedent in a democracy. It is not even sanctioned by our Constitution, which provides that even under martial law civil liberties will be respected.

History clearly shows that civil liberties are irreparably impaired without press freedom.

However, there is a form of abuse of freedom of press in a conservative rather than a disruptive force of a free society. The press does not only exert but instead promotes democracy that by feeds reporting on events and books and arguments communicating on them, a free people is able to protect itself from the inevitable abuse of power. A free press is the people's defense against deception, intimidation, and subjugation from forces inimical to their welfare.

Duly in despotic regimes is a free press considered a subversive force, for it is subversive of the arbitrary exercise of power, subversive of conditions that "enable the few" save the degradation of the many," subversive of the despotism of armed duplicity.

Let lawyers and constitutionalists argue the legalism that of Proclamation 1017.

We, the Bulacan journalists, stand by our faith in the freedom of the press. We find it degrading to have to argue for a movement's freedom that is the shining mark of civil society and the unquestioned of every man's life, liberty and pursuit of happiness.

A government, say, a free society, that cannot see this has already stained itself.

What's happening to the Arroyo administration? It seems that in its single-minded personal quest to survive at all costs, and to punish its enemies, it has totally forgotten or abandoned governance. This story is just one example of the breakdown in governance.

One ambassador in Romania, Noel Cabrera, came home and his family has undergone emergency surgery. While being prepared for the surgery at Dr Fabros Transplant Institute in Quezon City, he received a phone call from his staff in Romania.

"Why did you not tell us that you are going home?" the caller asked.

Cabrera was surprised. He had not signed. He had simply filled a medical leave of absence for his operation here. He had planned to return to his post in a week's time after the operation.

But during that brief time, a new ambassador to Romania had been appointed and confirmed by the Commission on Appointments. The process of appointment and confirmation was hush-hush. Cabrera was not even given a hint that he would be replaced. It was the Philippine Embassy in Romania that learned about it first before he did. And yet he is only a few kilometers away from the Department of Foreign Affairs and only a phone call away in spite of his nearness in the process that fits. he was the last to know of his dismissal. Until now, there is no formal notification of his dismissal.

Outgoing ambassadors are usually given at least six months' notice so they have time to prepare, pack their things, transfer their children to another school, pay their bills and settle their quarters or the next occupant, and say their farewells in the diplomatic community. No such thing was accorded to Cabrera. None of his dismissal came to him like a bolt from the blue.

Cabrera is perplexed. What happened? Appointments are confirmation by the Commission on Appointments take, on the average, almost six months. Be during those six months, nobody in the DFA or Malacañang or anybody else told him, or himself, that he was going home soon. Not that he has a hobby to cling to his position, he said. He just wants to know why he wasn't told. Why the person who holds the position was the last person to know that he would be replaced. He wonders at this lack of personal and courtesy.

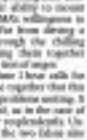
Cabrera said Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo were quite close, both of them being among the few appointees to GMA's Cabinet. Cabrera does not recall any problem with Malacañang either, when he was first appointed there. So why was this done to him? he wonders.

Why indeed?

Backlash

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



I SAW A HEARTWARMING SIGHT LAST SUNday in Pueblo Bonzo' plaza in Quezon City called Bonzoland. The National Union of Journalists of the Philippines called for a gathering of journalists to talk about WHO attack on press freedom, and they crowd up in full force. The major networks and newspapers were there, along with the foreign media (I know this because I got interviewed by Reuter, a Japanese newspaper, the Voice of America and three local networks), and they were in a fighting mood.

One of the last things I heard there came from someone who said the curtailment of press freedom was not a threat, it was already being carried out. It was present in the efforts to shut down Channel 2. I agreed completely and quoted that line from the radio I used to last Monday's column. You say nothing when the State come to take your neighbor because he is a Jew and a communist, they will one day come for you. Never has that thought taken on an emergency level of urgency to these parts. Only this last few days, the media have fought back over the case of the Tribune.

But the first thing I heard there came from our publisher Cory Yuvienco who reminded the world of why "human rights" is part of the Inquirer's governance interest without a free press and a free press without a government, he would readily choose the second. Never has that thought so taxi taken on awesome resonance in an empowered land of regimes where people have right now may reasonably be called "government." We haven't had one in some time; what we've had is a bunch of political goons pretending to be so. Random reared that the Inquirer would not bow down to the imposition, a tactic our newspaper praised in its editorial last Monday.

But what doubly gladdened my heart was not just the brave souls which the journalists expressed their desire to fight back, it was the size of the crowd in the face of tyranny. Wednesday is a joyless lot, competing with one another, in dead often intriguing against each other, with a knowing and deliberate pessimism as their only weapon. Yet instead of the usual dozen or so, there were hundreds there, and they were not just from the media. There were students, there were professors, there were lawyers, there were activists, there were ordinary citizens. It was a heartening sight.

I have always said every time I hear calls for this country to finally come together that this country has never had any problem uniting. It has done so repeatedly and, as in the case of the two Edsas, completely euphemistically. Unfortunately, in the case of the two Edsas one obscene, the other tragic, it was for the sake of fighting against a common threat than in fighting for a common good. The closer the threat, the stronger the unity, the distance of the threat swelling selfishness or self-interest and even inspiring civilization and self-sacrifice.

PP 1017 is doing exactly that. It does get something right in its "whereas-es," which is that the effort to oust GMA comes from the left and right. In fact, it comes from the Center as well, which completes the full political spectrum and which represents the entire country in one fell swoop. But that is not completely, that is an open call to raid an illegitimate government by illegitimate means. PP 1017, the left, Right and Center were pretty much going their separate ways. PP 1017 has just brought them together.

The other useful purpose PP 1017 has served is to dispel the apathy and indifference that have gripped the country over the last several years. You can't find a more cynical group of people than journalists ("Iyong dawa, ewan ihan"), but if they can motivate themselves against the encroachment of their freedoms, so can the rest of the Filipinos.

I myself have been particularly pissed off by that idea of "moving on" in the face of wrongdoing and injustice. And particularly as articulated by that line, "So GMA cheated in the elections, so what?" It's that frame-ing of mentality that has gotten us to this pass. It's that system of convenience and compromise, that unmoving and unmoving tolerance for abuse, that has brought us to this pass. It's that willingness to let a kleptocratic outdoor get away with outrage after outrage after outrage that has led her to think she can get away with stealing the nation's forebears. I have asked again and again: Why do most protest what is clearly wrong, what will you "intervene" in?

But until PP 1017 came along, few convincingly. The spiritual fatigue was such that other people just thought to grin and bear it or, at most, come pitiful of previous failure have done. Save for other shores. Or look only at the "positive" side of life, like Pangasinan winning a boxing match. Two cold centimeters that come this month have ignited a sudden blast of enlightenment in their disciples by hitting their heads with their craft. Either by divine intervention, or selfish machination, PP 1017 has come along and hit Gloria and GMA's heads with a crash. And so sparked a sudden blaze of enlightenment.

Some things you can thank Gloria for.

Cracks in the chain of command

THE TURMOIL INSIDE THE MALACAÑANG HEAD-quarters in Fort Bonifacio has finally come to the sudden relief of three commanders: Maj. Gen. Hermogenes Mercado, stacked with the administration of the more conservative, Brig. Gen. Nelson Allegre, that "We will follow the chain of command; we will follow the Constitution and the duly-elected national authority."

The officers who sponsored against the rebellion seemed to be the hardest after a six-hour standoff had after dialogue declared, "I am now serving commander of the Marines. The Philippine that we Corps is told." But contact has yet to realize this is expected by the time of the night. Officially, confirming the morning soldiers, following the pre-limitation of a state of national emergency last Friday.

The announcement is not reinstating. It merely papered over the festering tensions inside the National Police Commission, some of the military after the proclamation. The tension was first described by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a former Marine commander, who mediated to avoid an armed confrontation during. He said nobody knew the details on April 26 that the "plan" was being implemented. Biazon said that few even the President knows that – the exact time and the details of this kind. It's boiling inside."

The standoff highlighted cracks in the military chain of command. The latest has serious political implications. Gen. Angelo Reyes is the only general left for the civilian armed and the notion of supremacy of civilian authority over the military. He stepped into a delicate role after the President has ruled out martial law and the military's refusal to support the armed forces, and leaves the door wide open for a military takeover. Reyes can count on the support of the political crisis that has rocked the government for the past nine months.

The last time the chain of command was tattered was in 1989, when rebellious soldiers launched a series of coup attempts to overthrow the late President Corazon Aquino. The rupture took up to bloody street battles in Makati between forces supportive of coups and rebel troops.

Analysis

Amando Doronila

While it may be true that the government has foiled a planned overthrow, the regime has made by a "second alliance" of mutinous opposition politicians, "military adventurers" and "communist rebels" conspired. In a statement said "government conspiracy to bring down the duly-constituted government in the 2004," ironically the proclamation of a state of national emergency, as a response to the coup attempt, appeared to have steered the country's drift to a more serious risks of a military takeover. This is so, because the proclamation has now made the civil government dependent on its enforcement on the Philippine National Police and the Armed Forces which have been called use "to prevent or suppress all forms of lawless violence, as well as any act to enforce obedience to all the laws and to all decrees, orders and regulations promulgated by me personally or upon my direction." By the same token, the military has been given the power granted to implement PP 1017 requires calculatory looking and the Free Freedom-assisted arrests in checking is uncertain.

The Bicutan Corps, the supplies outlining some of the MPD's key strategic military units refused to be involved in the revolt of regular troops to political authority have strong challenges from civilian mass action and rebellious military units. The incident is a microcosm of wider unrest in the Armed Forces.

The emergency proclamation tackle the first flaw, described, laws proved to be a measure of mark because of two things: that, dismissal in the Armed Forces recognize the organizations's leaders to the commander in chief are danger that thought, and second, the government has become dependent on the military as it becomes more dependent on the military if political resistance to the regulations was being undertaken excesses.

The problem for the government does not come from civil unrest in the streets. Street protests since the EDSA Revolution have not succeeded in bringing the ban on public demonstrations. And as long as the police and the military are loyal to the government its enforcement would remain intact, the public dissident may be manageable.

But in contrast to the Edsa Revolution episode, there were elements among the Marines who were planning to declare withdrawal of support from the government to join civilian protesters. The civilian groups which assembled at Fort Bonifacio on the pretext of visiting the detained Marines, were hoping that the vanished would break in the landslide of the dispersed Marines and signal more defections from other units in the Armed Forces.

The civilian groups claimed that they were to the camp that is protest with "justice" for Marines, but their assembly was coincidentally partisan action on the side of the disgruntled Marines. The real, aim went out of their way to enable an internal dispute of the military. Their presence could not have helped either side of the dispute. They expected themselves refusing caught in the crossfire.

If 1017 has clothed the military and police with broad emergency powers, putting them in the position of preventive laws and infringement of civil liberties, the Supreme Court, Congress and even Cabinet members. With the proclamation, real power to defend the limits has effectively shifted to the hands of the soldiers. This opens opportunities for them to take power themselves or to force their civilian superiors.

The enhanced powers of military intervention is the strongest arguments for the President to lift the emergency proclamation.

What to do next?

At Large

Rina Jimenez-David

"Such attempts overstep the noble task of the military be a democracy. The consequences of such actions can become civilian disturbance of a magnitude that threatens civilian supremacy over the military will be extremely difficult to reverse and would be seriously harmful for the country's future.

"The experience of countries in which a politicized military has taken over powers, what we often refer to as 'banana republics,' spans existing dissensions of three contemporaneous. Once having acquired the taste, military leaders have not given up power easily. A cycle of constant struggles for state control among military elements begins, to the detriment of political stability, democratic freedoms and national development.

"Democracy demands the rule of civilians who are legitimately chosen from and by the people, and who simply have to answer to only to any might. It is important to recall the principle articulated by the ONCP in its protest statement of January 2006: Actions that weaken democracy by consent mean human means in reaching any genuine reform are unacceptable, especially since they would only bring about new forms of injustice, hardships, and protest here in the future.

"THE ISSUES: threat to democratic freedom is related in Proclamation No. 1017 should be reasoned, questioned, and resisted. Even constitutionally sanctioned emergency powers can be abused if they are exercised disproportionately to the point of undermining basic rights. It is alarming that even now, three weeks in to indications of abuse, there is still no move to withdraw these basic and charges. This is a serious and unacceptable violation of civil and political rights.

Two decisions: the present administration's utmost necessity, remodeling the media must be resisted. Her only are those moves of open hostile administration, but that same administration's own actions steadily unjustified, as such a measure would violate the freedom of expression which is a fundamental tenet of democracy.

"We must not be naïve and unarmed. Many groups have taken and will continue to take advantage of the present confusion. By especially religious and Church groups, must be wary about which groups we ultimately wish, lest we inadvertently legitimize and support anti-democratic groups with sword interests.

"For question of the future governance of the country, should the present administration fail, is not to our advantage to consider some of the usual considerations. What answers power, with what mandate and what agenda, are questions that we must seek answers to from those who aspire to call on support.

"THE PRESENT administration's options to frustrate legitimate constitutional means of reform and accountability must be held responsible for the present crisis. Extreme unrest's constant attempts to evade accountability and use reform have made the military options seem attractive and inevitable to some.

"Thus, it is necessary that the following be addressed with greater urgency – the search for truth on the many controversies of the recent past; the restoration of the people's faith in the electoral system and reform; reform in the military; and the continuing search for solutions to the problems of poverty and inequality that have been at the root of unrest.

"In this situation, the following are opportune immediate courses of action:

• Gathering of prayer for peace and a vigorous campaign for non-violence.

• Gathering to exchange reliable information, and to discuss collectively in the light of emerging developments.

• Organized mobilization of protest against the surveillance of democratic freedoms in Proclamation No. 1017."

Monuments

Looking Back

Jaydesh M. Christopher

In the sculpture apparently sculpted on a photograph of Bonifacio killed by a more mature sketch for the monolith defiance. But why the error?

There is the dubious because Bonifacio may the killer Bhutan, who no one outdoes think is discouraged not be on that busy intersection. Monuments are supposed to remind us of the past. Is the past that we cannot remember to the present. The unfortunate name of Mary Aquino falling from the airplane seats is another case in point. If we do not have our history, you would think he slipped on the pavement at the hotel or his death would be forgotten.

Then there is the newly inaugurated statue of Jaydesh "Joy" Lontoc on Bonifacio Boulevard based on a campaign photograph. It is now unexplained as the statue of a gunman looking triumphantly on the ground after a complete series of burns in his face.

Monuments are meant to help those who view them to remember their past, not use as nostalgia but rather as a guide to the present. Lontoc's life was one that was marked by great achievements and a great tragedy. He was the Philippine history's escape, for he served in one of a handful of lights in the dark days of martial law and, of course, he will be remembered for making the supreme sacrifice of his fortune and confidence by hanging down one rung in the stage pavement. He was a man who was willing to die for the sake of unity and change, for the sake of the greater good. He stepped down and Lontoc Aquino became president. If only a monument could be made to speak then maybe we can listen to his words:

"I have discovered the truth of the eternal moral principles that determine the destinies of men and nations. I also realize that the most important duty of the day is to live by them. I have built in the Senate Band, but I am particularly emboldened to remember that in our time a man is not built if proved by help – and help did come.

But one thing stands out. I have noticed that whenever I prayed for help, help came. Not always as I envisioned, even if what I asked for was good. But whenever I prayed hard for values, I was always answered. And when I prayed for what I believe would lead to the greater glory, what I asked for happened immediately.

"The point is that God answers prayer. Today against ours, we must be good men to ourselves but to others. Basically to be a true leader of men, you should only think of and feel for those you lead. Your thoughts should lead you your heart must be with the people. You must be ready to suffer the righteous cause, to defend only for the thought that history will duly remember you.

"A final point – selflessness is vital in approaching such long-standing problems. Things appear much simpler when one is able to detach oneself from the problem, thus becoming objective and unemotional enough to apply the fundamentals. The self becomes a more detached but finer link into time."

Maybe Joy Lontoc is a person in the complex jigsaw puzzle that is our recent history and not previous situation. Perhaps he should have been a philosopher and a writer instead of a politician. Where his personal papers are opened to us, maybe he will probably find inspiration and hope in the future.

Comments are welcome at jcmpublications.ph.edu

Thaksin and Arroyo

THE SAME DAY THAT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO declared a state of emergency, Thailand's Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra dissolved parliament and called for congressional elections on April 2.

Both Arroyo and Thaksin ride This year a personal's first name event in media accusation, have been facing strong opposition to their leadership. What we are exhibiting it in in ongoing talks, one area of very politicians free of very economic corruption with democracy, and implications for many in many countries of Thaksin's [illegible].

Arroyo and Thaksin became heads of state in 2001, but under different circumstances. Arroyo was handily sworn in as president following the ouster of Joseph Estrada. Thaksin was elected.

Arroyo comes from a political family, her father having been president 40 years earlier. Thaksin is a self-made person who started out as a police officer, but went into business, starting with computers and building up a huge telecommunications empire. Forbes magazine has listed his assets among the world's richest persons, with assets worth more than $1 billion.

Thaksin used his political power, Thai-link that this Thai Love Thai's, with an populist policies that have always political ideology or program to win 374 out of 500 seats in the Thai parliament. He governs with a style of patronage that depends on the power of his base in the provinces and on win the distribution of cheap medical insurance for rural areas.

Arroyo, on the other hand, lacked charisma and was constantly criticized for policy flip, and being more interested in her passport of running for president. It is ironic that in the annual's problem it helped Arroyo. In 2001, she declared she would not run for president in 2004, but later she broke her own promise.

The year 2004 was also a year of both Thaksin and the Philippines. Thaksin's party won three years this time, getting 260 out of 500, but this one still considered a landslide victory.

Arroyo claims she won over Fernando Poe Jr., albeit by a small margin. In 2005, Arroyo was accused of electoral fraud, but attempts to impeach her were blocked in Congress.

Thaksin's popularity has declined through the years, with repeated questions raised about his business interests. He has been accused of using his office to benefit his own, particularly in the way he handled a crackdown on drug traders (with 2,300 deaths that were seen as extra-judicial executions) and in the handling of a Muslim insurgency in the south.

Opposition came to a head in January when his family sold their shares in Shin Corp., a large telecommunications company to the Singapore government's Temasek. Thaksin cleared to double tax on the country deal, he was accused of using loopholes to evade payment of taxes on the $1.3 billion accumulating from the sale. Instead, Thaksin are unhappy with the way our he large and rural company has gained a huge payload.

Unimpressed

Thaksin stood his ground, claiming there was nothing wrong with the transaction, but opposition continued to grow. In February, a Thai court cleared on its appeal as were charges the case, claiming the allegations were not detailed enough.

Criticism of Thaksin began to come from different quarters, including the owners of several more universities, the government employees' federation, some in the business community, and the police force. The Thai Rak Thai Party and ongoing that he could not survive both on the 17 million Thais who voted him into power.

A turning point came about two weeks ago when Thaksin's own political mentor, Chamlong Srimuang, "dismissed" the prime minister. Chamlong is a highly respected political and religious leader (he is one of the leaders of a Buddhist sect called Santi Asoke). In 1992, Chamlong was one of those who challenged military strongman General Suchinda Kraprayoon and brought the regime down.

The Thai Rak Thai Party has been holding its own since its block impeachment hearings, but her popularity ratings have remained negative over the last few months. Rumors of discussion within the military have increased by several months, culminating with denials of an attempted coup that led troops to declare a state of emergency last Feb. 24.

That, then, is the background to the dissolution of Parliament and called for congressional. Three of the major opposition parties – Democrat, Mahachon and Chart Thai – have said they will boycott the elections.

Twin

The similarities between Thailand and the Philippines are not coincidental. For almost decades the two countries are political twins, both countries are still hobbled by what we call regional or traditional politics, ranked by corruption and cronyism. Political interests still dominate national politics, refusing to the other long-standing issues the nation.

Both countries have had their share of dictatorships, during which strong man governments organizations and people's organizations emerged. In the Philippines, we saw how the civil society was mobilized for People Power in 1986. Similarly, students that students have played important roles in the history of Thailand, the most recent of which being that lives as they faced up to a much more brutal military establishment.

On the economic front, Thailand was, until the 1970s, less developed than the Philippines and was no students to the Philippines to study agriculture, engineering, public health, etc. But in the decades that followed, Thailand developed and implemented a strong family planning program. In 2005, Thailand and the Philippines had about the same population, at 40 million, with notable levels of development. Today, they have 64 million while we have 84 million. Thailand, unlike the Philippines, has a per capita income of $2,600.

While Thailand has developed rapidly, it remains plagued, as the Philippines is, by gross income inequality. Both Thaksin and Arroyo claim their economic policies are pro-poor, but have been criticized as having made the rich even richer.

But there are differences between the two. Thailand has a new background theme, in the way he negotiates and bargains. The Thai system includes Thaksin, allowing him to dissolve parliament and call for new elections. Even the people, for to candidates he can cop you economic and political measures of the advantage, which is why the opposition has called it abusive.

Arroyo, on the other hand, knows no other world except that of politics. Her model seems to be still another political clan. Unfortunate (except Mr Bush, who took office the same day as she did, on Jan. 20, 2001), Bush has a lot of problems, but he has been more persistent, and Bush does have his finger on the trigger only.

But ultimately, we will have to answer to history, and to our children, not so much those who the most easily and running now among political leaders as we what we did to safeguard our most delicate democratic institutions.

Prejudicial to farmers' interests

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

LETTERS

PRESIDENT, IS THE STRIKING out possible terms, Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's issuance of Proclamation 1017 and her subsequent declaration of a state of emergency among those crying out in indignation against the proclamation are thousands of small farmers who form part of Centro Saka Inc.'s network of farmer organizations and rural development advocates.

We also condemn the violent dispersal of peaceful demonstrators who were legitimately exercising their right to gather and their freedom of expression. Among those who were brutalized and thrashed by water cannons were small farmers, both adults and rural women leaders who merely participated in peaceful seek redress for the injustices and the insufficient support they have been getting from the government.

Clearly, the Arroyo's declaration of a state of emergency is a sign of weakness. It demonstrates that she can no longer govern in the normal way. The country is confronted by numerous problems, but declaring a state of emergency is not one of the solutions.

If anything, the issuance of Proclamation 1017 will only make matters worse; it is but a step down the dangerous path to authoritarianism and repression. The wanton/out arrest of Prof. Randa David, whose only sin was his participation in a legitimate protest action, is an ominous indication of how far the Arroyo is willing to go, to maintain her hold on the reins of power. Her administration's moves do not bode well for the interests of the small farmers.

Declaring a state of emergency at a time when we are supposedly be commemorating the reinvention of democracy is an exercise of bullets in its most despicable form. Clearly it is not in the best interest of the small farmers that this Arroyo remains in power. The longer she does, the worse off we all will be.

—GERRY SANTOS,
Centro Saka Inc.,
Philippine Center for Rural Development Studies,
Rm. 501 PSK Bldg.,
Commonwealth Avenue,
Diliman, Quezon City

Time for Senate-House debate on Charter change

I FIND IT TRAGIC THAT JOSE E. Zarria, director of the Senate Public Relations and Information Bureau, misleads popularity as an indicator of sound legislation.

In his letter (PDI, 2/14/06), he tried but failed to answer the challenge of Inquirer columnist Belinda Olivares-Zamanan for our esteemed senators to engage the members of the House of Representatives in a debate on Charter reform, an issue of far-reaching implications for the nation. Instead, Garcia pointed out that Senate President Franklin Drilon and the Senate organized and conducted higher than Speaker Jose de Venecia and the House in recent popularity ratings.

Popularity has never been a reliable gauge for the upraise of public policy or, for that matter, good governance. The task of leaders is to show people a clear vision for a better future—and a definite roadmap on how to get there, regardless of how popular or unpopular these are.

In Venecia's vision of a parliamentary system and a unicameral parliament—and an overall federal system—for the country—efforts a genuine alternative to our people who seek a way out of a political system that breeds more divisiveness than unity, more hate than real accomplishment.

The proposal to reform the Constitution to establish a unicameral parliament is an idea that has invited much banking since its infancy such that 70% of its merits have been appreciated by the public. The presidential lunch fueled at Charter reform bonbon are definite indicative of the present momentum for the initiative.

As the House draws close to finishing out the full details of its Charter reform proposal, there is no better/for making sweeping and ultimately self-serving accusations that the House majority has "abandoned its duty to defend the public interest on behalf of partisan and local interests," while pursuing the Senate as a defender of the public good. Such accusations do not help the public at all or make informed decisions.

Perhaps, Garcia should answer the unanswered query of Dr. Arroyo: Will the Senate finally engage the House in a debate on Charter reform?

—NOEL L. AGRAVIO,
deputy secretary general,
Public Relations
and Information Service,
House of Representatives,
Constitution Hills, Quezon City

Bishops are no Spanish friars

INFINITE CAGBLE OF THE PHILIPpine Bishop Sobrey and Governor Sanchez and Manuel Morato of the Philippine Charity Prescriptions Office blessed the Catholic bishops to the Spanish friars. Because of the former's personal letter expressing their opposition to mining. The two must have forgotten Philippine history.

The Spanish friars kept their monks shut on the country's inequitable economic set-up precisely because they were benefiting from it. They owned large tracts of land, on which they collected rent. They used their position to maintain the status quo.

Today the members of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines are trying to use moral reasons to oppose investments which they believe would not help ease poverty but instead contribute to the destruction of forests and people's livelihoods. If the bishops choose to remain silent, the mining firms and corrupt governmental officials in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and local government units will have a heyday exploiting the country's natural resources, leaving nothing for future generations.

The principle of separation of Church and State should not be used as an excuse by abusive government officials and exploitative large corporations to stop priests, nuns and bishops from voicing what they believe are just and true.

—RAFFY REY ESPIRITU,
policy advocacy officer,
Broad First Information & Action Network Philippines,
98 Barangka St.,
Barangay Central, Quezon City

Why communists oppose mining

I AM A CATHOLIC BUT I WAS shocked by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' call for a total ban on mining—a call that I believe is both illogical and naive. The whole world will permit to a halt without mining...for does not all have an automobile, cement, tin foil, tin can, etc. The world have no trades, airplanes, tractors, buildings, bridges, pens, facilities, food etc. Only primitive agriculture will be possible, and as billions will starve, in other words, we will be back to the Stone Age.

The CBCP call attacks of pro-hypocrisy since the bishops rule in car made of steel, live in houses made of cement and are electricity which is produced by power plants using either coal or oil for generation. They also eat food derived from crops grown with the aid of fertilizers manufactured mainly from petroleum products.

The controversy started with the Marcopper mine spills which polluted a river in Marinduque. However, I don't recall anyone dying from that incident. Letters on pointed/one exploited this event as a propaganda tool in seeking a ban on mining. But what we need are mining regulations to prevent or minimize a similar incident in the future. Invoking a total ban on mining is ridiculous and illogical. It is like asking for a total ban on cars and banes since thousands die every year in accidents involving these vehicles.

The Philippines is rich in copper and gold and several other minerals. Mining can bring in tens of billions of dollars and create hundreds of thousands of jobs which this poor country desperately needs. This is the reason why the communists are vehemently against mining since this could help the country progress. It is not surprising that the communists don't want this country to prosper, for the only way they can hope to take over the country is if the people remain poor.

The problem with the bishops is they listen to young priests, some of whom are most likely communist sympathizers. The only way that mining can progress is when the government makes it a policy to do the exact opposite of whatever the leftists advocate.

—ROD SORES,
Rizmahouse Street,
Greenhills, San Juan, Mla

Long live the true spirit of Edsa I

I MUST NOT HAVE BEEN AT THE Edsa Shrine when the country marked the 20th anniversary of the **Edsa People Power I.**

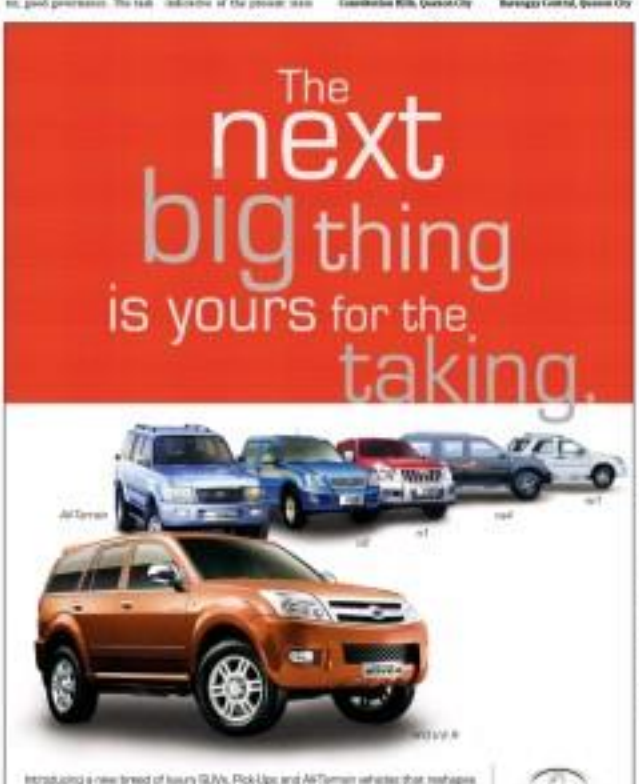
However, I am one with Comedie Quines and the rest of truth-loving Filipinos in celebrating the spirit and essence of Edsa I, which is standing up for justice and truth as whatever cost. Mabuhay ang Pinoy!

Long live the true spirit of Edsa! Edsa I for another people's search for truth and struggle for liberation from greed and deceit. Bless power to be Quines!

—LEH BUNAGAN JR.,
lehen_003.272@yahoo.com

Erratum

In the Feb. 28 issue, a letter to the editor was titled "Recall Pasuquin (GOV)." The correct number of the proclamation is 1017.



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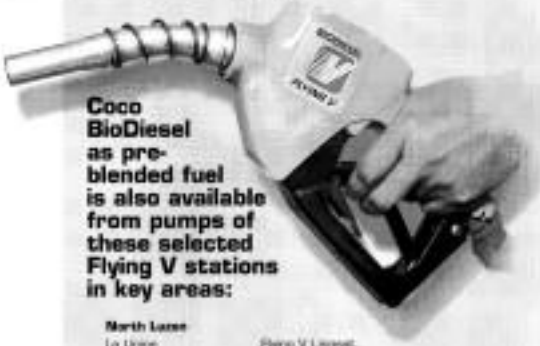

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Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Militant leader slain amid crackdown

LUCENA CITY—A HIGH school teacher and provincial chair of the left-wing Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) was shot dead by a lone assailant late Monday, a police report said yesterday.

Senior Insp. Ernesto Cotimah, chief of the investigation and intelligence division of the city police, identified the victim as Napoleon Hernandez, 50, a faculty member of the Quezon Institute of Technology (QIT) here.

Police said Hernandez was walking alone along Ibrita Road near the school in Barangay Bayanan Ilaya when he was shot with a .45 cal. pistol by a still unidentified man, police said.

The killer escaped on a motorcycle driven by another man.

The victim died on the spot from several bullet wounds at different parts of the body.

Hernandez's left behind a wife, also a teacher at the QIMIS, and two children.

Leny Antolin, chair of the human rights group Karapatan in Quezon, condemned the killing and quickly pointed to the military as responsible for it.

Antolin noted that Hernandez had long been receiving death threats.

"No bag attended are running but threats. He said, 'Let us always take care of himself, especially during these dangerous times,' she said.

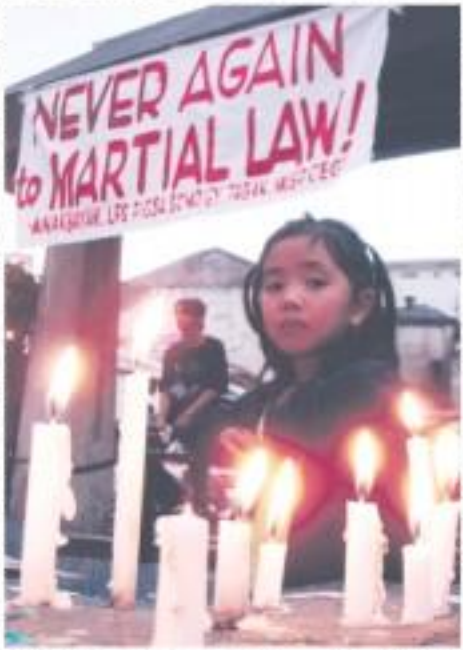
The victim's colleagues in Bayan said his murder was another blow to the front of local and national leaders. Jeanette Almonte and Roberto de la Cruz.

"All of them were killed by fascist forces ... in one year among legitimate democratic," Antolin said.

Almonte, a former Bayan Muna-Quezon chair, was killed in February last year, while he is Cruz, an Anakpawis coordinator in Isabela, was also dead last month. Both killings have remained unsolved.

The killing of Hernandez came as the crackdown order of President Macapagal-Arroyo started to crackdown on leaders and members of the Left and Rights.

The campaign, her officials said, was in response to a purported coup plot against his lawyer. Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



DARK HOUR: Lit candles, one of the symbols of the fight against the Marcos dictatorship, are again emerging to be the symbols of the fight against what protesters in Baguio City said was a return of repression through Proclamation No. 1017.

Anti-theft trap kills woman, 2 kids

By Felipe V. Celino
PDI Visayas Bureau

KIDAPAWAN CITY—A 100 PERCENT effective burglar trap using rubber-coated spring lie with and two-old-

dren of a farmer in Matalam town in Cotabato on Monday afternoon.

Gilbert Lauzon, 32, of Sitio Napo, Barangay Meotland, Matalam town, died at the scene when he inserted the lid with Lito, 12, and Aldren—Hazon, 4 and Emery, 3—were found dead near the mouth of a drain.

His youngest son, Dennis, 1, survived and was brought to the Nitsuma Magpet Medical Center in Kidapawan City.

Gilbert was an armed citizen. It happened, police said.

Police said Hazon and Gilbert were playing when Hazon accidentally touched a two wire placed atop a bamboo fence. Charge were also electrocuted when she came to the rescue of her older brother.

Sup. Rico Pangilinan, Cotabato provincial chief, said Lito went out of the house, crying her youngest son, when she heard her two children crying for help. Gilbert was Chinese in the grassy portion of the yard when Lito touched Hazon's body.

Lito and her two children were brought to the hospital by neighbors but were declared dead on arrival. The three suffered electric burns, doctors said.

Cebu lawyers wear black armbands to protest 1017

CEBU CITY—LAWYERS IN CEBU yesterday started publicly expressing their protest against Proclamation No. 1017 by wearing black armbands in courts at the Palace of Justice here.

Lawyer Alex Tolentino, president of the city chapter of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP), urged the people to follow their example and show outrage over President Macapagal-Arroyo's declaration of a state of national emergency.

"We wanted to demonstrate our grievance against the President for issuing the proclamation," Tolentino said after he launched the protest movement at noon at the local IBP office.

Tolentino said the IBP produced black armbands on which were written "No to PP 1017."

"Those who want to wear the armbands could get them at the IBP office at the Capitol Compound near the Palace of Justice," he said.

Tolentino said the pieces should be displayed in the light area.

"Let us show our unity against this grave violation of our rights. We will wear the black armband until the President has lifted this proclamation," he said.

Tolentino said they chose black, not red, like the other anti-Arroyo groups, to differentiate themselves from militant organizations.

Black also symbolizes "the death of our civil rights," he said.

Bienvenido Bareman, former IBP-Cebu City president, said the proclamation was an assault on people's civil liberties.

Bareman said the lawyers viewed with grave concern the raid on the Daily Tribune office, the arrest of militant leaders and others perceived to be critics, and the threat of takeover of media institutions. Shannon Mapalilicuan, PDI Visayas Bureau

ROUNDUP

Lanao rice production up

TUBOD, Lanao del Norte—Rice production in the province last year surpassed the national average by 31 percent, a feat described by Gov. Imelda Dimaporo as encouraging. Dimaporo said 138,400 metric tons of rice were harvested in 28,100 hectares of farms in 2005. Average production was 4.93 MT per hectare. The provincial government has been providing farmers technical briefings and irrigation assists at cooperative sites. Corn production was also up by 6 percent last year. Ryan Rosauro, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Action plan vs tuberculosis

CAMP PHILIP CITY—Health authorities here and representatives from the pharmaceutical industry will sign a memorandum of agreement, part of the implementation of agreement with Mayor Vicardo Amante supporting a "city tuberculosis action program." Vito Cruz, provincial antituberculosis coordinator, said the lung disease was the killer killer in this city and the seventh in Laguna. The No. 1 killer in the province is cardiovascular disease while the second is cancer, according to Cruz. Ronnie Ponte, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

College autonomy pushed

NAGA CITY—The House of Representatives has approved autonomy for two state colleges in this province. Rep. Leo Villafuerte said. He maintained hopes that the Senate would also grant autonomy for The Colleges the Camarines Sur Polytechnic Colleges and Bicol Colleges of Arts and Trades. Autonomy would qualify the two schools to become fully government-sanctioned tertiary educational institutions with guaranteed yearly appropriations. Jose Encarnacion Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Livelihood for Legazpi women

LEGAZPI CITY—The city government is strengthened its livelihood assistance program with a practical skills training program for women and day care services for parents. Under the City Social Welfare and Development Office, the skills training includes food processing and preservation, chocolate candy making and baking. PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Festival of products

LIBACAO, Legazpi—Farmers gears for the second Magayon Festival, which will showcase products of its fifteenth municipalities on March 6-12. To be featured are coconut products from San Pedro City, the banana of Guinobatan, goat cheese of Tiwi, Oas, Manito of Libon, woodcarving and paper mache of Pareo, and duck and egg products of Ligao. PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Bicol media summit

LEGAZPI CITY—At least 60 journalists in Bicol are expected to attend the First Bicol Media Summit on Press Freedom and Responsibility in this city. The meeting, sponsored by the Center for Community Journalism and Development (CCJD), will examine media's role in democracy and in government reforms. Red Mariano, CCJD executive director, said the summit is part of continuing efforts to involve media in government reforms with the help of the United Nations Development Program. PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

DU gets 210 computers

LIBACAO CITY—The Bicol University has formed a partnership with the Global Technology Academy (GTA) of Seattle that granted the region's premier state university (BU) 210 computers. The program also involved the Philippine Computer Society. Founded in 1968 by Bjak Jain Pao, the GTA provides its partners with access to modern technology. PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

ARMM needs P15M

COTABATO CITY—The Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao needs an extra funding of P15 million to redeploy its Regional Consular Zone leaders to Brunei, Jesse Dureza, presidential adviser on the peace process, said the need money would be used to invite foreign investors to consider the ARMM as their "stop of destinations." Ishak Mastura, trade secretary of the ARMM, said funding would come from consultations of The Philippine Foundation Zone Authority (Peza), which needs more than P300 million to this national treasury. Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

NPA's claim offensives

LUCENA CITY—Communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said Rep. Emmylou Taliño-Santos's bill to hold rebel officials against government forces during the past two days for retaliation of the state of national emergency. Rosal mentioned in the CPP/NPA and Regional Committee Paul Escandido as Salvador Escandido, a secret leader in Daraga, Legazpi, Oas, Tabaco, Ligao City, Polangui, Guinobatan, Camalig, Libon, Jovellar, Pioduran, Malilipot, Malinao, Tabaco City, Tiwi, Rapu-Rapu, Gubat, Sorsogon City, Barcelona, Pilar, Prieto Diaz, Irosin, Juban, Bulan, Matnog, Sta. Magdalena, Donsol, Pilar, Castilla, and Sta. Ana, Sorsogon. Lagman and San Isidro, Albay. Rosal also claimed that the NPA conducted operations in Albay, Camarines Sur, Camarines Norte, Sorsogon and Masbate. Sally Hidalgo-Arce, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Pampanga history twice told

Ad man digs up local history from old photos, postcards

By Tonette Orejas
Angeles City

ALEX CASTRO HAS MADE sure that his collection of old photographs and postcards would not remain private. He shares these through the pages of his new, self-published and single-bound book with two titles—"Views from the Pampanga and Other Scenes" and "Scenes from a Borderown and Other Views."

Castro, who spent more than 25 years in the advertising communications industry (Remember that classic laundry detergent's "Labadami, Labanga!" jingle?), also made sure that his exciting of local history would be rich with visual materials and information on Pampanga and his hometown, Mabalacat.

An artist Gil Reyes, himself a Kapampangan from Apalit town, did not fail to see Castro's novel approach to discovering local history and writing about it.

Said Reyes during the publication's recent launch: "Treasures of one of the most visited private collections of photographs. Castro responds to the attraction of the visual. The photograph does inspire the author to summon the information to give flesh and blood to the subject."

In "Views," rare stills are windows to at least 80 essays on Manila Carnival fireworks, means of transportation, games and toys, household servants, Manuela Arayan and Pinatubo, Clark Field, Rio Grande River, religious traditions, and burial and wedding practices.

Also featured are churches, local cuisine, crops, the sugar industry, Spanish and American education, priests, Aeta people, Igorots the Gabi brothers, show biz talents and literary geniuses, martyrs for freedom, Benigno Aquino Jr. and even gunos dancing to[illegible].

"Pinatubo sublime to be frivolous," notes Reyes of the topics.

Definitive history

The other title, Extended on just about anything Mabalacat, is no comprehensive. Its 32 essays can read as the town's definitive history.

Castro forgets not to devote an essay on the "name" of Baler Gregorio Ramos, the reason the town—as old folks say—progressed slowly despite it being a neighbor of Clark, described as a "piece of America." Love hurts in how the same up the attitude towards the feared Aetas, which a number of aircraft accidents and train tunnels.

He tells all these in an engrossing manner, as he does his ads. The client's "spirit of place," says Reyes, "accounts for the personal tone of his essays—witty, loving, luminous, almost with the thrill of 'the find,' which is every collector's high."

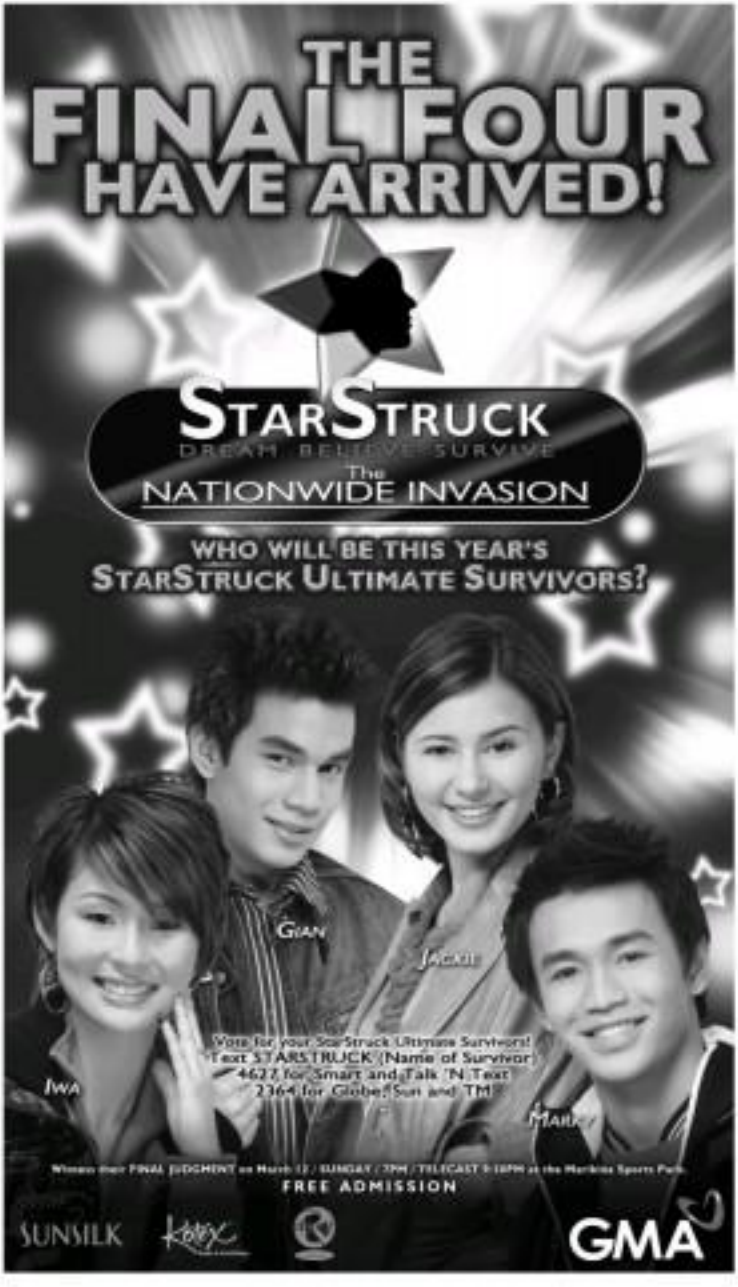
Castro finished the book in four years, amid ad making and working as consultant of the Holy Angel University's Center for Kapampangan Studies.

He has helped make the past of Mabalacat, as well as Pampanga's, no longer a foreign country.

"From all these small pieces of mosaic emerge a clearer, bigger picture of small town Philippine, Pampanga version. Like the historian William Henry Scott's 'Cracks in the Parchment Curtain,' which boasts revolutionary pin points of light on Philippine prehistory, Castro's mosaic collage of history contributes a reporter's innate curiosity (the art historical sensibility) with a painter's appreciation to imagery, a building up of substance through an accretion of de-

FR. GREGORIO Ramos, the last Recoleto priest of Mabalacat, was killed at the height of the Philippine Revolution. He was supposed to have cast a curse on the town before his death, saying it would never prosper.

MABALACAT seen booth at the Pampanga Carnival and Exposition 1933.



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Lira Ester G. Dipasupil

BREAK'S OVER
Students go back to school after classes were suspended on Friday and Monday following Malacañang's declaration of a state of national emergency in a crush on alleged coup plot. →

Ex-Taguig mayor cleared in mart demolition case

By Nelson F. Flores

THE FOURTH DIVISION OF THE Sandiganbayan has acquitted former Taguig City Mayor Fernando Peña Jr. of the graft charges filed against him in 2001 by a group of vendors who accused him of ordering the illegal demolition of a flea market in 1997.

In a 33-page decision dated Feb. 28, the antigraft court held that Peña's action was within the authority granted his office under the Local Government Code and did not require court sanction.

"The absence of a court order for the demolition in question did not constitute evidence bad faith. Contrary to the claim of private complainants, the demolition without a court order is sanctioned by law," the court said.

The charges against Peña stemmed from a complaint filed by officers of the Taguig Pinagsama Vendors Association Inc. who claimed that the mayor and municipal engineer Ernesto Mendiola had authorized the illegal demolition of the flea market.

The case was filed in the Office of the Ombudsman in 2001.

Peña pleaded not guilty to the charges while Mendiola never showed up, prompting the court to order his case archived for lack of interest.

The vendors had claimed that Peña's order to demolish the market was arbitrary because it reportedly violated an agreement that they would be relocated.

They added that their concession and other property worth nearly P300,000 were damaged during the demolition.

Peña also said that Papa's move was politically motivated.

The Sandiganbayan, however, noted that a demolition notice had been served to the stall owners as early as Aug. 29, 1997, nearly three months before the demolition. The notice carried out on Nov. 23, 1997.

In addition, the court said that the flea market had been built on the understanding that it would be temporary and that no additional stalls would be set up.

"As construction permit, building permit or mayor's permit was ever issued for its operation, it added.

"At an illegally constructed structure, the flea market is a proper object for the municipal mayor's demolition power which Papa was obliged to exercise," the antigraft court said.

As to allegations that politics was involved in the demolition, the Sandiganbayan pointed out that Papa assumed office as municipal mayor only on Sept. 6, 1997, more than a week after the notice of demolition had been served on the vendors.

Delinquent Malabon taxpayers told to pay up

By Nancy C. Carvajal

PAY UP OR WE'LL SUE YOU.

The Malabon City government will file charges against 20 business establishments in the city which had been delinquent in paying their taxes.

Robert Lim, the city's legal officer, said that with the computerization of local government records, they have discovered 50 companies which had not paid their taxes in the last 10 years.

"Back taxes as far back as 1995 were not collected from these companies. This is not fair to those who have paid their dues on time," he said.

Lim did not name the companies, but he said that he had already sent several notices for them to settle their P500 million in back taxes.

Should the companies fail to settle their obligations, Lim warned that they would be forced to auction off their properties in favor of the city. He added that the large pieces of property—those over 3,000 sq m—would be sold first.

Lim added that with the money, the city's dependence on other revenue sources, like the Internal Revenue Allocation, would be drastically reduced. He said that although the city government had doubled its tax collection, it is still dependent on other sources to finance some projects.

He paid for the cake, but where was the wedding?

By DJ Yap

A RETIRED AIR FORCE COLONEL WHO agreed to become the godfather at a stranger's wedding ended up losing his cellular phone and P500 in cash.

Emmanuel Hernandez, 56, told the police yesterday that a man handed on his door at 1:45 in the morning of Feb. 19 at Sitio Villa, Quezon City and asked if he could be one of the godfathers at his wedding.

The man introduced himself as Renato Santos, said he was a neighbor who lived in Area 3 at nearby Barangay Bistro, Fernandez said.

Although he did not know the man, Hernandez said he trusted himself saying yes. He also told SPO2 Rafael de Rosha of the Quezon City Police District's criminal investigation division that the marched asked for P500 to buy a wedding cake.

Again, Hernandez couldn't say no and handed the money to the suspect.

Moments after the man left, Hernandez noticed that his phone, a Nokia 6610i, was missing from the table where he had put it.

"Because else but the suspect would have taken the phone," De Rosha quoted Hernandez as saying.

Later, Hernandez learned that his neighbor's name was not really Renato Santos but Ramon Avila.

Dr. Peralta said the retired colonel only had the minimum wounded in the pillar blows but did not file any charges against the suspect.

"Hernandez said he would just charge it to experience," the police added.

MetroBriefs

Honest gov't employees

TEN EMPLOYEES of the Taguig City government will be honored on Monday with P10,000 in cash in recognition of their honesty after they returned the bag to Rosalie Tan Bonsato (center) in Barangay Ibayo-Tipas. Bonsato (left) and Mayor Sigfrido Tinga (right) witnessed the ceremony. Tinga also announced that he will increase the honesty incentive to P15,000 starting next year. —Jocelyn R. Uy

New Marikina barangay?

MARIKINA'S biggest barangay, Concepcion Uno, may be split up into two if residents agree to the proposed creation of a new barangay during a referendum on Saturday. The city government approved an ordinance last year creating a new barangay out of a portion of Concepcion Uno. The new barangay would be called Barangay Tumana.

"The size and the population of Barangay Concepcion Uno are huge. We think it would be more manageable if we create another barangay," Vice Mayor Marion Andres told the officials. Should residents approve the proposal, the number of barangays in the city would increase to 16, following the creation of Barangay Fortune last year. —Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

UM Law reunion

THE UNIVERSITY of Manila (UM) College of Law will hold its alumni reunion on March 5 at the UM-RCI Inc. do ka Dambana del Aguinaldo in Aguinaldo, Ahlow graduates of the university are invited to the affair which will be hosted by members of Class 1986. Contact persons are Librehad Libo-Barcenas, 921-0693; Pomposo Cruz Lozano, 925-1256; Bonifacio Marquez Jr., 748-91 21; Angelo Valdes, 359-0286; Rhonnie Andrada, 870-1871 or 880-0000; and Philip Lorenzo, 921-7042.

DBP
Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines, a trading interested bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for the Supply and Delivery of the following Vehicles:

Vehicle Type	Quantity	Unit Cost/Budget	Approved Budget*	Cost of Bid Documents
Four wheel vehicle (diplomatic quality manufactured, assembled and completed engine with displacement of 2,400 cc, direct injection four stroke diesel, DOHC four valve per cylinder, turbo charged intercooled, 2,400 cc minimum displacement, 16 valves, 4 cylinders in line, 4 stroke cycle, 4 wheel drive, 2 speed transfer case, front differential lock, rear differential lock, 4 wheel steering, 4 wheel independent suspension, front and rear stabilizer bars, 4 wheel disc brakes, rated power 120 kW (163 PS) at 3,800 rpm, maximum torque 380 Nm (38.7 kg-m) at 2,000 rpm, 5 speed manual transmission, 6 passenger capacity, 4 doors, with tinted glass, with power windows, power door locks, power steering, power mirrors, air conditioning unit, AM/FM stereo radio with CD player, front and rear bumper, color: Pearl White)	6	P1,500,000.00	P9,000,000.00	P5,000.00
Four wheel drive sport utility type 4x4 first up, double cab, diesel engine, turbo charged, intercooled, engine displacement of 2,800 cc, 4 cylinder, in line, 4 stroke cycle, maximum power 120 PS at 3,600 rpm, maximum torque 343 Nm at 1,800 to 2,200 rpm, 16 valves, 2 valves per cylinder, DOHC, 5 speed manual transmission, 4 wheel drive, 2 speed transfer case, front differential lock, rear differential lock, 4 wheel independent suspension, front and rear stabilizer bars, 4 wheel disc brakes, rated power 120 kW (163 PS) at 3,800 rpm, maximum torque 380 Nm (38.7 kg-m) at 2,000 rpm, 5 speed manual transmission, 6 passenger capacity, 4 doors, with tinted glass, with power windows, power door locks, power steering, power mirrors, air conditioning unit, AM/FM stereo radio with CD player, front and rear bumper, color: Pearl White)	6	P1,500,000.00	P1,800,000.00	P5,000.00
Four wheel sedan vehicle with four (4) doors and gasoline engine with a displacement of 1600 cc, 4 cylinder in line, 16 valves, 1.6L DOHC, 16V, Coupled SFI, Max. Output 90 kW (122 PS) @ 6000 rpm, Max. Torque 155 Nm @ 4400 rpm, 5 speed manual transmission, front wheel drive, with power steering, power windows, power door locks, power mirrors, air conditioning unit, AM/FM stereo radio with CD player, front and rear bumper, color: Pearl White)	1	P 748,000.00	P 748,000.00	P500.00

*Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening

Expected Date of Delivery: May 2006
Schedule of Activities

Particulars	Date	Place
Pre-Bidding Conference	March 7, 2006 (Tuesday) at 10 a.m.	4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Submission of Eligibility Requirement, Documentary Stamps and Proposal Proposals	Once again 9:00 a.m. of March 21, 2006 (Tuesday)	Bids and Awards Committee, 4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Eligibility Requirement Documents	March 21, 2006 (Tuesday) at 10 a.m.	4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City
Opening of Proposals (Proposals to be accepted on or before the date and time specified above)		

Bidding shall be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in Republic Act (RA) 9184 otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines and to entities or organizations of a country that grant reciprocal rights or privileges to citizens and organizations of the Philippines pursuant to the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9184.

Interested bidders may download the Bidding Documents from the website of the Philippine Government Electronic Procurement System (PhilGEPS) at www.philgeps.gov.ph and the Development Bank of the Philippines' website at www.dbp.ph. Bidders should register with the PhilGEPS and submit the Certificate of Registration and Membership in accordance with Section 8.5.2 of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9184.

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested bidders from the Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat, 4th Floor, DBP Building, Makati City, starting March 7, 2006 up to March 21, 2006 (Tuesday) from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (Php) 5,000.00. The method of acceptance will be over the counter only. Prospective bidders who purchased the bidding documents shall be allowed exclusively by the prospective bidder or his authorized representative.

The Pre-Bid Conference shall be held at the address below on or before March 17, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the acceptable forms and amount stipulated in the Bidding Documents.

Contact Person for Inquiries:

Name	Address
1. Capt. Leonilo Abad, Logistics Head, Intelligence Group (AFP)	Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City Tel. No. 912-3232
2. Mario Aguinaldo, Jr. (Lt. Col. (ret.))	Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City Tel. No. 912-3232
3. Ramon Rivera (Lt. Col. (ret.))	Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City Tel. No. 912-3232
4. Rodolfo Mendoza (Lt. Col. (ret.))	Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City Tel. No. 912-3232

The Development Bank of the Philippines reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

For more information, please call telephone numbers 818-9511 loc. 2610.

Bids and Awards Committee

TransCo
Republic of the Philippines
National Transmission Corporation

Section I. Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

Supply and Delivery of In-Circuit and Board Test/ Diagnostic Equipment/ Workstation
(Reference No.: PB060023 - 21/06TT)

1. The National Transmission Corporation, Head Office Region I (Transco) now invites bidders for the Supply and Delivery of In-Circuit and Board Test/ Diagnostic Equipment/ Workstation to apply for and to bid the Php 2,000,000.00 worth of the Total Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) for the Transco Project, subject to the provisions of Republic Act 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

2. The Transco is now inviting Bids from qualified Bidders for the Supply and Delivery of In-Circuit and Board Test/ Diagnostic Equipment/ Workstation. Delivery of the Goods is required within sixty (60) calendar days from the date of the Notice to Proceed. Bidders should have completed, within the last three (3) years from the date of submission and receipt of bids, a contract similar to the Project. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents.

3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using sealed bidding as specified in Republic Act (RA) 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act and its Implementing Rules and Regulations. Bidding is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, partnerships, or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to entities or organizations of a country that grant reciprocal rights or privileges to citizens and organizations of the Philippines pursuant to the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 9184.

4. Interested bidders may obtain further information from the Transco and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and purchase the complete Bidding Documents from the address below on or before March 21, 2006 (Tuesday) at 5:00 p.m.

5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on the above date and address upon payment of a non-refundable fee for the Bidding Documents in the amount of Five Thousand Pesos (Php) 5,000.00. The method of acceptance will be over the counter only. Prospective bidders who purchased the Bidding Documents shall be allowed exclusively by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

6. The Transco will conduct a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on March 17, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at the address below.

7. Bids must be delivered on or before the date and time specified above at the address below. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the acceptable forms and amount stipulated in the Bidding Documents.

8. Contact Person for Inquiries:

Name	Address
Capt. Leonilo Abad, Logistics Head, Intelligence Group (AFP)	Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City Tel. No. 912-3232
Mario Aguinaldo, Jr. (Lt. Col. (ret.))	Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City Tel. No. 912-3232
Ramon Rivera (Lt. Col. (ret.))	Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City Tel. No. 912-3232
Rodolfo Mendoza (Lt. Col. (ret.))	Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City Tel. No. 912-3232

9. The Transco reserves the right to reject any and all Bids, waive any defect therein, or not award the Contract at any time prior to Contract Award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

10. For more information, please call telephone numbers 912-3232 loc. 2610.

Bids and Awards Committee

National Transmission Corporation - Head Office Region I
Dr. Alejandro Roces Sr. Ave., Diliman
1101 Quezon City, Philippines
Tel. No. 912-3232 Fax No. 924-4661

10th Anniversary

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Messages

DR. JAMES G. DY
Chairman of the Board and Chairman, FCCA

MR. CIRILA KEE LIN
Vice Chairman, FCCA
Chairman, Hospital Administrative Committee, FCCA

TEODULO RANGAYAN, M.D.
Medical Director, CGH&MC

BUN YOK O. DY, M.D.
Director, CGH Heart Institute
Associate Medical Director, CGH&MC

ALFONSUS S. CHAN, MD
Coordinator, CGH Heart Institute
Associate Medical Director, CGH&MC

March 1-3, 2006

PROGRAM OF EVENTS

March 1, 2006

11:00 am

Blessing of the Coronary Care Unit
Blessing of the Neuro-Intensive Care Unit/ Acute Stroke Unit

Welcome Remarks ..... **Dr. Teodulo Rangayan**
Medical Director, CGH&MC

Message from the Chairman ..... **Dr. James G. Dy**
Chairman and President, FCCA

Message from the Heart Institute Director ..... **Dr. Bun Yok O. Dy**
Director, CGH Heart Institute

Closing Remarks ..... **Dr. Alfonso S. Chan**
Assoc. Medical Director, CGH&MC

12:00 pm - Lunch

1st Post-Graduate Course
Cardiovascular Medicine in the New Frontier

March 2, 2006 - DAY 1

8:00 am - 9:00 am - *Registration / Opening Ceremonies*

Session I - Coronary Artery Disease

9:00 am - 10:00 am ..... *Risk Factors for CAD: The Old and the New*
- Hayde Morales, M.D.

10:00 am - 10:30 am ..... *Acute Coronary Syndrome*
- Timothy C. Fo, M.D.

Session II - Vascular Disease

10:45 am - 11:45 am ..... *PAD: Diagnosis and Treatment of Common Presentations*
- Juliana Shia, M.D.

11:45 am - 11:45 am ..... *Acute Aortic Clinical Syndromes and Acute Aortic Dissection*
- Tess Abola, M.D.

Session III - Luncheon Symposium

12:00 pm - 1:00 pm ..... *Acute ATHEROTHROMBOTIC SYNDROME*
- Philip Aries Bartol, M.D.

Session IV - Echocardiography

1:00 pm - 1:30 pm ..... *Intro to Echocardiography*
- Avelino G. Pinlibo, M.D.

1:30 pm - 2:00 pm ..... *2-D Echocardiography - What's New, What to Expect*
- Mary Ong Lee, M.D.

Session V - Electrophysiology

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm ..... *Managing the Patient with Pacemaker*
- Raimundo Soja, M.D.

3:00 pm - 3:30 pm ..... *Electrophysiology in the Philippines: Past, Present & Future*
- Anthony King, M.D.

March 3, 2006 - DAY 2

Session VI - Congenital Heart Disease

8:30 am - 9:30 am ..... *CHD in Adults: Diagnosis and Treatment*
- Bun Yok O. Dy, M.D.

Session VII - Valvular Heart Disease / Critical Care

9:45 am - 10:15 am ..... *Mitral Stenosis: Percutaneous Treatment Strategies*
- Allan Bautista, M.D.

10:15 am - 10:45 am ..... *Valvular Regurgitation: New Indications for Surgery*
- Nicky Tuazon Ohta, M.D.

10:45 am - 11:15 am ..... *Critical Care: New Concepts and Strategies in Cardiac Arrest*
- Ana Maria Bahena, M.D.

Session VIII - Luncheon Symposium

11:45 am - 1:00 pm ..... *CHF in the Acute Phase*
- Renato Dilanganda, M.D.

Session IX - Cardiovascular Surgery

1:00 pm - 1:30 pm ..... *The Current State of Off-Pump Cardiac Surgery*
- Manuel C. Chiongbian Jr., M.D.

1:30 pm - 2:00 pm ..... *Surgical Management of Acute Aortic Dissection*
- Simon Nolan Lee, M.D.

Session X - Interventional Cardiology

2:00 pm - 3:00 pm ..... *Coronary Intervention 2006: The Current Perplexities*
- Wilson Tan De Guzman, M.D.

Session XI - Research

3:00 pm - 3:30 pm ..... *Research in Developing Nations*
- Felix Penaloza, M.D.

4:00 pm - 6:30 pm ..... *Closing Ceremonies*

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SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Melendrez

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Compton not sure of Welcoat berth

By Jane Meneses

ALEX COMPTON'S PASS TO the Philippine Basketball Association lies solely with the PBA Board of Governors.

But that's not the only issue it will decide on.

PBA chief Ely Capacio said the board will test Compton's eligibility based on his passport and Welcoat's appeal to diversify into the American expatriate as two separate issues.

"We should isolate this matter to two things," said Capacio. "Considering Compton in the PBA and the request of Welcoat to include him in its lineup should be tackled as separate issues."

The first issue, at least, has gained headway. Three teams have already expressed support for Compton's bid to play in the pro league. Several others have hinted that they see no problem in Compton's joining the PBA.

But Capacio explained that while the PBA could open its doors to Compton, the 1999 Metropolitan Basketball Association MVP would still end up with another team.

"We should honor this issue for the board to decide," added Capacio.

The Welfoil franchise, which formally took over the PBA rights of Shell on Monday, has asked the league for concessions on player requirements—including the possibility of directly hiring Compton—when the team makes its debut next season.

Compton, 32, has already gained the support of PBA commissioner Noli Eala, as far as playing in the league is concerned. Talk 'N Text, NLEX and Alaska have also given their green light for the move.

"There's a guy who stayed in the Philippines for so long, learned our language and helped the OIL (pino people) any area he can," said Talk 'N Text governor Didier Mariga.

Powerhouse have also strengthened Compton's PBA drive.

Interleague Class Oliver and Billy Robinson showed the Montenegrin power at break (6:0, 39%-19%). Oliver and Robinson are full-blooded Montenegrin-reserved in Filipinos.

Eala, however, said Oliver and Robinson were allowed to play as locals to boost the playing field at a time when the league was dominated by Ginga and Toyota.

"There was no All-Filipino tournament at that time," said Eala. "They put Oliver and Robinson there to make the team competitive against Ginga and Toyota."

Compton made it into the basketball limelight in 1998 when he saw action for the Manila Metrostars in the now-defunct MBA.

Explosive PBA openers, tougher format

A NEW FORMAT AN EXPLOSIVE GAME. A GOLDEN 10 TEAM OF KNOWN names and the All-Star Week are just some of the great things that will happen in the PBA Unity Makati-Philippines Cup. Commissioner Noli Eala and board chair Ely Capacio can only look forward to this "All-Filipino" conference starting on Sunday at the Araneta Coliseum. Two explosive matches, pitting (6:07) against Coca-Cola and San Miguel their serious headers will usher in the nine-team conference over its Batangas Stadium last year. The competing teams will figure in a double round robin with the top two teams earning automatic slots in the semis. Only in the elimination round, Talk 'N Text and Purefoods will fly to Hong Kong for the PBA's first official overseas match. It will be held March 19 at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium. The match, sponsored by PLDT Global will offer free tickets to Hong Kong. Flight after the Hong Kong match, the PBA shifts into high gear with its preseason cup with a game already scheduled for Tuesday, March 28. The All-Star Week is scheduled and of April.

MVP award no ticket to PBA's newest team

By Jaclaire W. Pape

NOT EVEN THE MOST VALUABLE PLAYER IS assured of a slot.

Jojo Tanghay, the MVP in the last PBL outfit, once, still has to jockey for position when Welcoat Beverages debuts in the pro league next season.

The last conference in the PBL will serve as a tryout for not players," said Welcoat team owner Raymund Yu.

The entertainment-led club said Sunday it officially announced the acceptance of the Welfoil franchise as the league's 12th member in the PBA for next season. Besides consistent payment, Welcoat will have to pay the PBA a P50 million franchise fee.

The pro league allowed Welcoat to choose three players from its amateur team.

Presumably, Tanghay, Jojo and Mehmet has chosen a short list, which includes collegiate standouts Jaypee Cabuna, Sergey Emilio Jay Mapalad and 6-foot-7 center Jun-R Reyes.

The two officials said they might also make Tanghay along with fellow ex-pros Gilbert Malabanan, Marvil Ompacin and Eugene Tan.

"We have thought of bringing all of them, but nothing is final," said Yu of the four free agents on the Welcoat roster.

Welcoat coach Lawrence Chua is the PBA head coach, will take from the 100 pick in the first round and the first pick in the second round of the PBA rookie draft set in August.

Moreover, Welcoat can select from the draft on draft. The nine teams in the field will only have 10 "protected" players, allowing Welcoat to pick from a pool of 110 players.

Meanwhile, more than 40 players are expected to participate in the PBL rookie camp at 1 p.m. today at the Reyes Cup in Mandaluyong.

Yet, agents are also encouraged to try out. Deadline for application is at 12 noon today.

Gonzales shares third; Mariano bounces back

FILIPINO JESSON GONZALES TOOK THE sculpt of fellow International Master Richard Bitoncio of Serbia and Montenegro to share third to ninth-players after four rounds of the IL Open International Bishop-to-Spotter Monday night in Malaga, Spain.

Gonzales, eyeing his third and final Grand Master result, jumped to 3.5 points, in the company of top-seed GM Oleg Romanishin of Ukraine and five others.

After posting three straight wins, Romanishin drew his match with Garry Quillen of England.

Semifinals GM Slavko Cvitan and Slovak IM Marko Mestar share the lead with 4-0 scores after beating Spanish IM Borgen Blumenhofer and German GM Arkadij Rotstein, respectively.

Filipino GM Nelson Mariano II bounced back to contention by crushing Sergo Siavrige GM and climbing to 2.5 points, good for a share of 20th to 37th places. Marlon Bernardino, Cornelio Bautista and Rolando Tacoronte Jr. also scored victories.

Political crisis puts Pacquiao's RP fight in peril

By Sabrett L. Lagumbay
Cebu Bureau

THE COUNTRY'S CURRENT PO-litical crisis is about to claim another sporting victim.

The recent state of emergency declared by President Macapagal-Arroyo has forced organizers of the Manny Pacquiao-Oscar Larios bout, slated May 20, to consider transferring the fight from Manila to San Francisco, California.

HBO executive Gary Merchant said the recent developments in the Philippines might discourage HBO from sending its crew to cover the bout in the Philippines.

Interviewed over Hispolit.com yesterday, Merchant was quoted as saying that, considering the current state of affairs in Manila, it wouldn't be advisable to hold a "significant" event," such as the Pacquiao-Larios duel, in the country. So cited San Francisco as a "strong contender" to take the boxing shows from Manila.

If the fight is transferred overseas, it will be the second big sporting event that the area will have removed from the country further the Philippine Open badminton tournament, which would have drawn top shuttlers from around the world, was postponed indefinitely apparently due to the state of emergency.

Manila Golf 3rd behind Palos Verdes, Orchard

PENINSULA TITLE CONTENDERS MANILA Golf Club, and not Villamor as earlier reported, finished third in the men's Sportsmanship division of the 59th Philippine Airlines Interclub on Saturday at the Palos Verdes and Alps Golf and Country Club courses in Batangas.

No one could be the organizing committee declared Villamor as having finished third behind champion Palos Verdes and Orchard at the end of the tournament.

Manila Golf conducts a day best 117 on Saturday and finished with a 638 tally, just 7.1 points behind the 631 of Palos Verdes.

The members of the MGC squad are Jerome Lazard, Luis Carlos, Manuel Chan, Eduardo Garcia, Alfonso Reyes, Eduardo Cojuangco, Kenneth Yang, Eduardo Co Unjieng, Aurelio Pajares, Christopher Ordonez and Jerome Valdez.

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Mendoza tops 1st Clark Duathlon leg

THREATED JOINT "BAE BOY" MENDOZA flaunted his superior strength in taking the first leg of the 40k Clark Duathlon Levi-sponsored series last Sunday at the Clark Expo grounds inside Clarkfield, Pampanga.

Though lacking in training due to the continued ocular status of the ousted Prince of the Philippines, where he is an enlisted citizen, Mendoza pulled away early and handily kept his crown by stopping a site finish in 1:20:09.

Fellow national team member Arthur Valdez settled for second place more in 1:20:37 while national pool member Augusto Bernardez placed third in 1:21:23 of the 30-year-100-like-50-survivor.

The 24-year-old Mendoza, backed by lifemate, took the lead from Valdez in the very first loop of the first 5k run leg and then pulled away in the bike leg to clinch his winning clinch to three years in local duathletes.

"I struggled a bit because of lack of training as we were swallowed to the new lives more of the old days," said Mendoza in Filipino. "My opponents were better prepared but I still managed."

Mendoza will be leaving for Thailand this month to compete in the Mekong Power sports festival as his final tune-up for the latest Southeast Championship set April 9 in Clark.

The women's side had national triathlete Gilbert Lucas, a high school junior at Woodlands Academy, topping the nine-distance, clocking 1:35:10, like fretted Jess Phi Leynildo at 2:06:103.

Other notables were Philippine Air Group Triathlon Series champion Jim Mongolbong topped the 30 and under division in 2:01:08, finishing several overall to Lucas.

The event, organized by the Clark Multi-sports Group and sanctioned by the Triathlon Associations of the Philippines, lured more than 70 bets from BCR, Barangays and security provinces.

Many more will benefit if Alex gets into PBA

IN HUDDLE

Ben Cal

DESPITE THE PROSPECTIVE ticket prices and the prevailing political situations, thousands trooped to the dynamic Coliseum last Friday and Saturday to watch American professional wrestling in WWE Raw Live.

Perhaps our memory fails me, but I don't recall seeing the Big Dome that jampacked. Even tickets in the gallery section were sold out. "Packed to the rafters"—this is an accurate description. Fans didn't mind climbing out hundreds, if not thousands of paces, just to see the heels, battling superstars and their sexy female counterparts in action.

Not surprisingly, the audience was composed mainly of children, teenagers, young adults and parents who accompanied their kids. Frans and Glenn Pamaran even with their three boys, and I saw Sen. Bong Revilla in the cool also with his son.

It must have been quite an even, partners for Chavi, last as it was for me. I got both an eyeful and an earful. More than anything else, it was a spectacle—complete with fireworks—to entertain the masses.

The show must have quite an entertainment, and the fans couldn't have enough of it.

* * *

Because of WWE's expanding, success, we can expect *Smackdown vs. another* wrestling group, to come into the country this October.

Solar Sports' Peter Chenbong said wrestler Dave Batista, who is of Filipino-Greek origin, belongs to this group.

Batista's real name is Dave Michael Bautista.

* * *

I wonder if this was a rifle video of superheroine Miles Cooperguy Amoncio that was shown on national television the other night. He looked like the lead for considerable weight, considering that she spends so much time in the kitchen preparing food for her father's guests.

At least that's what the motel-view report said. The beach babe even showed her favorite menu, which was no yummy it made my mouth water.

Could it be true that for better, POC president Ricky Cojuangco, (not) been involved in the recent disinformation which was purportedly hatched at his mansion Dasmariñas Village residence where POC meetings were held and where the plan to overthrow the BAP was also hatched?

* * *

Reinfatuation of Ole chatterbox Miss Cooperguy must be heroically pouring that he will be finally allowed to play for Welcoat in the PBA.

In all his years as a cager, the kind-hearted Alex has always demanded a significant portion of his monthly salary in the month.

With a bigger salary in the PBA, more people will benefit from it.

I believe Alex's case should be considered special. Many moons ago, player-agent Jimmy Espiritu conducted a survey among PBA players to find out if they were agreeable to having Alex included in their ranks. The result was positive. There were a few senior players who said "yes" than "no."

* * *

HOOPVINE: World Boxing Council light flyweight champ Brian Viloria, who recently defended his title against Hiroyuki Hasegawa in Honolulu, arrived in Manila yesterday sans husband-Brian will be here for one week... IBF champion Vic Darchinyan, an incumbent citizen of downstate descent, is defending his title against Filipino challenger Diosdado Cabo on March 5 at the Oceanside Center Resort in Sin, Tono, California. The fight will be aired at 12:30 p.m. on Solar Sports... Jane sense said Phil ma Fabiani Mark asked me if I know anything about Chinese horoscope. "Do you know if the year of the dog brings bad luck?" he wanted to know, pointing out that in Bernard, the rate of the landslide is lucky, is a dog. No sense dog.

Fabiani's concern about Chinese, but what's the dog in the Philippine Arena stampede and the coup attempts? Bong has been both removed in the year of the watt... Now that so many human fetuses Blue Eagles have joined Red Bull, PBA owner Ms. mael Alfaro suggests that the Barako change their product to Blue Bulls... Guwalanon.

NAT'L INTER-COLLEGIATE

West Negros five zaps Altas

LEGAZPI CITY—WEST NEGROS COLLEGE steamed defending champion University of Perpetual Help, 65-58, yesterday to serve notice of its title aspirations in the 2006 National Inter-Collegiate Basketball Championships at the Bicol Convention Recreation Center here.

Four rookies led by Stanley Tilos, scored in double figures for the Binatangs, the Region II representatives to the championship organized by the Basketball Association of the Philippines.

Tilos finished with 14 points, followed by Eli Chute with 13, Dexter Vergara with 11 and Jonson Abaring with 10.

The Altas debuted with a 113-91 rout of Aquilan of Holy Cat Mendoza.

Equally impressive was Angeles University Foundation, which accepted National Capital Region opposition National University 79-73.

Anthony Hubbel, Chris Ingal and Allen Hobar combined for 41 points for the Great Danes, who relied on a strong start to topple the Bulldogs.

In the other Group A match, Colegio Filipino Fundacion downed Aquilan, 87-75.

One of the lone Autonomous University of Luzon redefined Dhaise Flood College, 99-91, and University of San Carlos clipped San Pedro College of Business and Arts, 77-62.

The stars:

PERPETUAL

GS 19—Allen 9, Ingal 9, Hobar 8, Bautista 8, Ji. Jo 7, Bernal, Gamara 5, Canal 5, Bernal 5, Bautista 0.

WI 15—Bringuela 16, Bautista 14, Bautista 0, Labarento 6, Amante 2, Tabada 1, Pio 2, Tampiri 0, Angus 2, Bala four 6.

A BALANCED attack by the Binatangs left the Altas stunned. RONNIE

Altas 45-21
SCORE CARD
WNC 87—Tilos 14, Chute 13, Vergara 11, Abaring 10, Bautista 8, Espiritu 6, Dizon 5, Dumdum 0
PERPETUAL 65—Allen 19, Bautista 9, Adina 8, Jose Lima 5, Lim 5, Jose 4, Mendoza 3, Bautista 2, Lucio Bautista 0
Altas 21-91

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NZ rider Robinson heads Masters of Asia moto cast

FRESH OFF HIS VICTORY OVER top local rider Alvin Aguilar, New Zealand's James Robinson will set out in favorite in the 2006 Masters Division of Asia-sized March 19-19 in Manila's Quezon City.

The 400kg-ton-based Robinson beat Aguilar, the former Asian champion, in the Pro Open class of the 2005 Circuit Internationale Supercross series in Talisay City, Negros Occidental last week.

The country's nine-time Rider of the Year is primed for the setback, though.

"While there is pressure since we are here to defend our title, I am not the fact that we will be having the crowd behind us regains all that," said Aguilar. "We are grateful to Camarines Sur over-up events in Talisay and Iloilo."

Several national champions are among seniors in effort to annually the second leg of the FIRST-2006 Asia Republic Motocross Championship.

The other men to watch are Japan's Hanaki Hagiwara, Australian Jet Harvey Wallbank, Malaysia Thaydin and Indonesia's duo Sudong Sugiyanto and Jimmy Ismail.

The Skinny Minnow is required to draw about 70,000 spectators to the sprawling metro track near the Puerto Princesa City Hall, according to the organizing NAMMA.

The race is backed by the Puerto Princesa City government, led by Mayor Edward S. Hagedorn, the Philippine Sports Commission, motorcycle lightning-rose and funds boxing magazine.

INQUIRER

TV GUIDE

Wednesday, March 1, 2006

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MARTINA Hingis prepares to return in Monterrey,Washington.

Pistons roll over Cavs again

CLEVELAND—RASHEED WALLACE SCORED 24 points and Richard Hamilton added 22 to lead Detroit to an 84-72 victory over Cleveland on Monday night, the Pistons' sixth straight victory and second in two days against the Cavaliers.

Wallace made four 3-pointers, a night after he split open Cavs center Zydrunas Ilgauskas' head with an elbow during Detroit's 98-78 home win. Wallace was fined $5,000 by the NBA on Monday for the flagrant foul.

LeBron James led Cleveland with 26 points and Ilgauskas, playing with five stitches in his head, had 16 points. The Cavs' last three had four straight.

Chauncey Billups added 15 points and 11 assists for Detroit.

In other games, Atlanta suspended Steve Smith, 3-for-11 shooting, 1-for-5 on 3-point attempts, 2 points, 1 assist, 1 steal in 20 minutes; Miami defeated Washington, 100-94; Phoenix crushed Houston, 111-94; San Antonio dominated New York, 111-91; Dallas whipped Philadelphia, 104-91; Minnesota humbled Sacramento, 119-89; Sacramento trashed Portland, 115-91; Utah defeated Golden State, 117-108; and the LA Clippers beat Charlotte, 95-87.

In Miami, Dwyane Wade was 15-for-19 from the field and scored 35 points, helping the Heat extend their season-best winning streak to six games.

Shaquille O'Neal added 27 points and 11 rebounds for the Heat, who shot a season-high 64 percent. They were only 20-for-35 from the line, including 12-for-15 by O'Neal.

Mike James scored 26 points for Toronto.

The Raptors lost their fourth game in a row, and the latest debacle came with Toronto on the verge of hiring Bryan Colangelo as president and general manager. He resigned Monday as president and general manager of the Phoenix Suns, and a news conference is scheduled Tuesday in Toronto to announce his hiring.

NBA ON TV 10:30 (9:30)—Orlando at LA Lakers. 11:30 (10:30) Denver at Seattle. 12:30 a.m. (11:30) Miami at Utah.

DWYANE Wade (right) lifts Miami over...

Hingis breezes through; Agassi, Hewitt triumph

KEY BISCAYNE, Fla.—FORMER CHAMPION MARTINA Hingis made a successful return to India by breezing past Shahzeen Washington, 6-1, 6-2, in 66 minutes at the Qatar Open on Monday.

Hingis, two months into her comeback following a three-year retirement, now playing her first match in Doha since she won the inaugural title in 2000.

She was broken in the first game by Washington, then won the next eight.

"I think I played very well, except the first game," she said. "I didn't miss much after being broken. During the first set, I knew I could do everything I wanted. I played all of my shots with confidence."

In the second round she'll face third-seeded Francesca Schiavone of Italy for a place in the quarterfinals.

In Doha, United Arab Emirates, Andre Agassi produced a strange feast to dispatch Belgium's Olivier Rochus, 7-6 (4), 6-0, in the opening round of the Dubai Open.

The 35-year-old American, playing only his second tournament of the season and third after his loss to Roger Federer in the final of the US Open last September, showed no obvious discomfort from the lower back strain which sidelined him for the last two weeks.

"It's good to be back on the court healthy and excited," said Agassi, who was also entertained by an ankle injury in the latter part of 2005. "I am still not as comfortable and that will take a couple of matches, but what was important was that I was getting into good positions which means I am winning well."

At Las Vegas, 3rd-seeded Lleyton Hewitt rallied to beat Florian Mayer, 3-7, 6-2, 6-4, Monday night in the first round of the Tennis Channel Open.

Mayer was leading, 2-1, when the match was delayed for over an hour because of rain.

After blowing four match points, Hewitt finally sealed the victory when Mayer's forehand sailed long.

Three of the eight seeded men were no longer in action after the first session. AP

Loss of Love hurts, highlights his failures

CARLSBAD, CALIFORNIA—NO one was sorry to see Tiger Woods leave the Match Play Championship. Least of all Chris Lowe Jr.

No one understood the pain that Lowe has any number of players can be chased up like Tiger Woods in the tournament, where anyone beaten second can go a bar hand.

"I'm not whining Tiger was beaten," Lowe said on the eve of the 36-hole championship match against Geoff Ogilvy at the weekend. "I'd love to play him again, though."

Lowe might have smiled the week around on Sunday at La Costa Resort to see the sting of losing.

Getting beat by Woods would have been understandable, because Lowe has a history of that. Woods was 10 when he won his first US PGA Tour event by beating Lowe in a playoff in Las Vegas with a par five from the Grand Slam of Golf when it was month-ship, and twice trounced him in the Match Play Championship.

Losing to Ogilvy only exacerbated Lowe's sadness.

It brought into focus even more that Lowe, a world-class player with 18 victories and a major, has gone without a victory in all of his last seventeen stroke-play US PGA Tour.

There is no such thing as an upset in the Match Play Championship. But there is such a thing as perception, and the final was a match everyone expected Lowe to win.

This was Lowe's best chance to capture a World Golf Championship, and a victory might have turned people to change the way they look at an otherwise sterling record. Along with his 18 victories and that win, Lowe entered PGA Championship as Reigning Player of the Year.

LOVE at Carlsbad.

He finished fourth this year and third in 2004. Lowe is the only player to have finished in the top three in each of the last three years.

Lowe's failure to win has been a source of frustration for him and his fans. Lowe's father, Chris Lowe Sr., died of cancer in 2003 at the age of 55. Lowe has said that he wishes his father could have seen him win a major.

Lowe's failure to win has also been a source of frustration for

ComicRelief

e-mail: [illegible] WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2006

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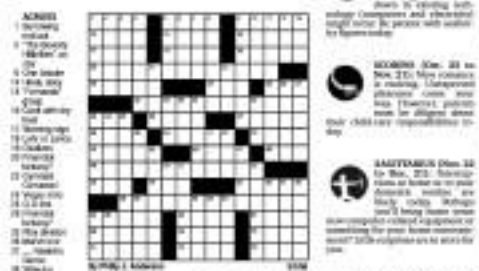

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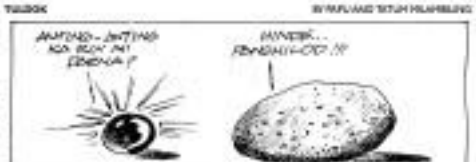

ENTERTAINMENT

Lito Zulueta & Yolanda

Opening Today

Nasaan si Francis?

Stars: Iza Calzado, Paolo Contis, Ricky Davao, Christopher de Leon
Directed by Gabriel Hernandez

A finalist in the first Cinemalaya and a product of the 2003 Sining Kuwento Workshop, Hernandez's script convinced award-winning actor Christopher de Leon and producer Lily Monteverde to make this directorial debut. A protégé of acclaimed filmmakers Peque Gallaga and Lore Reyes, Hernandez gathers a cranky cast and crew in telling his story of some young men lost in the drug underworld. Inquirer columnist Ernest Hemingway says, "Like Leon's performance is a standout... sensitive, fresh and vital... a sharp, powerful punch which lands the film a winning start and ring."

Pride and Prejudice

Stars: Keira Knightley, Matthew Macfadyen, Donald Sutherland, Judi Dench
Directed by Joe Wright

Jane Austen's "romantic, witty and emotional" novel is once again brought to the big screen after 65 years. The Bennet couple's tragic-comic attempts to marry off five daughters serve as the backbone of this "classic tale of love and misunderstanding, subtle enough to class-conscious 18th century England."

Director Abigail Gillespie of the Atlanta Journal-Constitution thinks the film "does Austen proud... romance, time passed and with a splendid, 'let's party' soundtrack (), that makes the characters not only seem alive, but also easy to identify with." Knightley, who received an Oscar nod as the heroine, is described by Glenn Whipp of the Los Angeles Daily News as radiant. "She shines... in a thrilling, pierced cinema that announces the arrival of both a filmmaker and an actress."

Capote

Stars: Philip Seymour Hoffman, Catherine Keener, Clifton Collins Jr., Chris Cooper
Directed by Bennett Miller

The biopic zooms in on ten years of author Truman Capote's life as he puts together the groundbreaking true crime classic, "In Cold Blood." A literary echo, the "non-fiction novel" chronicles Capote's downward spiral to despair and alcoholism. Hoffman snagged an Oscar nomination and SAG and Golden Globe trophies for his finely etched portrayal. Kevin Boggs' (host of the Chicago Sun-Times) "[He] relies of uncommon strengthened in eight about a man whose great achievement required the surrender of his self-respect... Hoffman's precise, uncanny performance doesn't intrude too much on cherished links." Owen Gleiberman of Entertainment Weekly agrees: a "taut, absorbing and thrillingly perceptive film. [...] that I have no reservations about recommending last robust Truman Capote did. It makes, fascinates and haunts." Enthusiastically a Apollo Chatman.

Fearless

Stars: Jet Li, Dong Yang, Collin Chou, Betty Sun
Directed by Ronny Yu

Named as Jet Li's last hung-fu movie, this epic chronicles the life of Chinese martial-arts hero Huo Yuanjia, founder and spiritual guru of the Jin Wu Sports Federation. Andrew Hung of Newsweek says Li's name sung "achieves the kind of success by wrangling chains for [action] stars... [it] represents his own attempt to atone as a middle place on the big screen." Patrick Frater of Variety reports that the film sets a hk, earning "$3.75 million in China and $1 million in Hong Kong." Ho Pin of Shanghai Daily opines: "Though some people doubt its artistry, [it] still says something else to Li's dazzling kung-fu skills ... it earned more than Hong Kong' to China."

PEOPLE ON Drew was lucky to dance with Cheryl; who was backed up by Pinoys

'I'm still in shock!'

Fil-Am Cheryl Burke wins 'Dancing with the Stars' in US, with celebrity partner Drew Lachey

By Janet Susan R. Magsino
Contributor

LOS ANGELES—"I STILL CANnot believe it. I'm still in shock!"

These were the words of Filipino-American choreographer-dancer Cheryl Burke, 25, who talked with Inquirer Entertainment after she and celebrity partner Drew Lachey of 96 Degrees won the popular ABC dance competition "Dancing with the Stars," now on its second season.

Lachey went up to Cheryl's mom, Hazel Bautista Burke, in the audience, and said, "Thank you for everything!" The older Burke explained in a phone interview: "He meant thanks... to all Filipinos who voted for them."

The winning couple were caught in a Hollywood party held to their honor Monday at 9 a.m. (Tuesday evening in Manila), then were to be interviewed via satellite on the New York-based "Good Morning America." Then they fly to New York to appear on the program live on Tuesday (Wednesday in Manila). They are also set to guest on the top-rated shows of Jay Leno, Oprah Winfrey and Tony Danza.

Then, Cheryl said, she will visit the Philippines. "She received offers to do some endorsements,"

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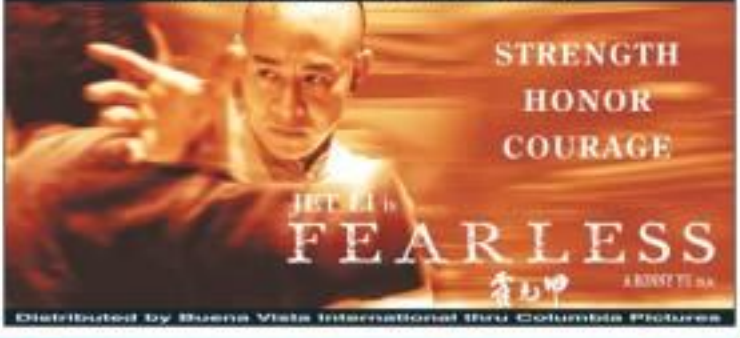

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'I'm still in shock!'

From page A3-1

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PRIDE & PREJUDICE
OPENS TODAY

her mom said.

Family affair

Sheryl was at the fi- said with her husband Dr. Robert Wall; their daughter Nicole; and Cheryl's showbiz-girlfriend Wendy Johnson.

The proud lady Cop heard mom said the proud hard on Sunday "I went to St. Brendan Church (in LA)."

She said the rest Filipino churchgoers there, who said they were "supporting one fellow Filipino [in the contest]."

Sheryl, a nurse who runs three health-care related businesses, said her ex-trainees told her, "Nerve to lucky because he's Cheryl's choreographer. A lot of Filipinos in America would be there."

"So," Sheryl noted, "it's not also a victory for the three million Filipinos in the US!"

Hearing they had won, over 100, green Jerry Rice and Stacy Keibler, Lachey gave out a loud "Whoooooooo!" and Cheryl started jumping up and down.

Dois song

For their finale number, the couple did a jive number to the music of Elvis Presley's "Hound Dog."

Judges found their finale number "the most exciting."

Fifty percent of the votes came from viewers, via phone and text ballots.

From the start, Cheryl and Drew were the couple with the best chemistry among all the 10 couples competing.

Some of the celebrities earlier eliminated were Hi-Jun actress Da Carrera and actor George Hamilton. The others who were gone before the last dance on Sunday were ESPN sportscaster Jenny Mayne, actress Tarah O'Neal, news personality Giselle Sesterdai, rap star Master P and talk show host Lou Diamond.

"Dancing with the Stars" was unprecedented two-fold full page color ads in major US Sunday papers. It ranked 7th in prime time ratings in a recent Nielsen Media Research.

Political films make strong comeback

VIEWFINDER

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10 PINK PANTHER

ERMITA

1 FEARLESS
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
NASAAN SI FRANCIS
4 FINAL DESTINATION 3
5 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
6 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
7 GRANDPA'S BOY

METRO EAST

1 FEARLESS
2 FINAL DESTINATION 3
3 CLOSE TO YOU
4 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
5 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
6 GRANDPA'S BOY
7 NASAAN SI FRANCIS
8 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA

NOVALICHES

1 FEARLESS
2 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
3 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
4 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
5 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
6 NASAAN SI FRANCIS

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1 BLOODRAYNE
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
1 FEARLESS
2 PRIDE AND PREJUDICE
3 BIG MOMMA'S HOUSE
4 MEMORIS OF A GEISHA

STA. ROSA — LIPA

1 FEARLESS
2 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
3 SYRIANA
4 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
5 CLOSE TO YOU
1 MEMOIRS OF A GEISHA
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
4 MURDER
5 UNDERWORLD 2

DASMARINAS — ANGELES

1 FEARLESS
2 WALK THE LINE
3 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
4 AEON FLUS
5 MURDER
1 FEARLESS
2 LITTLE MANHATTAN
3 AEON FLEX
4 CLOSE TO YOU

IMUS — STARMILLS

1 FEARLESS
2 CLOSE TO YOU
3 BROKEBACK MOUNTAIN
4 MURDER
5 NASAAN SI FRANCIS
1 FEARLESS
2 LITTLE MANHATTAN
3 AEON FLEX
4 CLOSE TO YOU
5 PINK PANTHER
6 SYRIANA

BACOLOD — ILOILO

1 SNOWDOGS 2
2 NEW WORLD
3 FIREWALL
4 GOAL
5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN 2
6 BRONCO
1 WALK THE LINE
2 GOAL
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Political films . . .

Print page A3-3

berg's "Munich," George Clooney's "Good Night and Good Luck," and Stephen Gaghan's "Syriana." See these movies now.

In addition, we recently caught Lit the Bangkok-flmaker the controversial Sakvaisaran film, "Sunshine Stone." It's about two suicide bombers, and you can't get more political than that!

Filmmaking is usually about escape, so when makers a serious director opt to confront whatever reality is around them's personal and film bits provide us with some sensitive looks and influences.

He served the US Army in Vietnam for two years, was wounded in action and decorated with the Bronze Star for Valor. He then studied in the New York University Film School.

Most significantly, he worked as a great range of jobs—taxi driver, messenger, production assistant, video representative, school teacher—which opened his eyes to the experience and needs of a wider range of people.

His filmography testifies to the pro-people consequences of this deep and rich experience. In 1978, Stone won his first Oscar for his screenplay for "Midnight Express," a film about a young American hooked on a Turkish prison after being caught smuggling drugs.

He once wrote the screenplay of "Scarface" and "Year of the Dragon" before directing his first personal film, "Salvador," in which James Woods played journalist Richard Boyle.

He followed up with the anti-war film "Platoon" in 1986. The movie was hailed as the first authentic look at the Vietnam war from the soldier's point of view and won four Oscars, including Best Picture and Best Director.

Then came "Wall Street," "Talk Radio," "Born on the Fourth of July," "The Doors," "JFK," "Heaven and Earth," "Natural Born Killers," "Nixon," "Any Given Sunday" and "Alexander," most of them perceptively and audaciously political productions.

Stone's engaged oeuvre has inspired other filmmakers in different countries to also produce movies that confront their viewers' diverse conflict, and we'll be putting some of them here this week. The arsenal of political films in world cinema proceeds apace!

Housing Race Axis'

ABS is looking forward March 15 for participants in its "The Amazing Race Asia," the first "made in Asia for Asia" version of the popular globetrotting reality series. Seven 12 teams will be selected to participate in the race, which will be produced in a series of 13 episodes. Each team will comprise two people with a preexisting relationship. The grand prize for the winning team is $50,000. Entry forms can be downloaded from www.amazingrace.com. Address all inquiries to Amazing Race Asia@abs-cbn.com.

Quirky humor, muted drama

'Capote' is held afloat by Philip Seymour Hoffman's performance

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

REVIEW

THE SLOWLY PACED DRAMA "CAPOTE" doesn't discuss the acclaimed author's early years or the time leading to his popularity. Instead, the story focuses on the dark and alienated period that frames Capote spent researching his fact-behind a Kansas family's massacre in 1959, subject of his non-fiction book, "In Cold Blood."

The story only partially and vaguely corresponds on the author's motivations. The film's real draw is Oscar contender Philip Seymour Hoffman's performance. To paraphrase what his character explained about his words, they can't be all-encompassing, as his different personas endure shift. So are their actions; we learn he becomes the person that he is or what he's trying to prove. He simply does what he can and rewards as it. Those who expect a fuller retelling of the author's life—as the title might suggest a thinly biopic—will be quite disappointed.

Distinctly offbeat

All we know is that Capote is beloved by a very diverse crowd, has a quirky sense of humor, and is capable of flirting and lying to get what he needs from people. His methods of entertaining gentlemen friends include vanquish (Clifton Collins, Jr. and Mark Pellegrino) our sweetheart, but he gets his desires in trouble.

Hoffman has handed a distinctly offbeat role yet again, giving Capote a wickedly playful aura that goes beyond the effeminate gestures and squeaky voice. We see him as somewhat our human, his vulnerabilities making him not another guy burdened with extraordinary obligations.

Despite the initial challenge for viewers to stay awake through the first half, the characters do flesh out. Miller keeps the main character interesting. We don't envy his fate, absolutely fear (or envy) his selfishness in the life of the party and he's subtle nor ridiculous; we still see he's easygoing and sensible.

Then again, it still makes us stitch the "Capote" shroud into events that shaped his personality. It might have added to the strength of the important period in the author's life. Still, it's unusual, energy-sapping, and unadventurous film kept interesting if not entirely offbeat, by Hoffman's unique and inspired portrayal.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 2006 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER B1

BUSINESS

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Peso surges to 51.65 to $1; stocks up 1.6%

Investors see early lifting of state of emergency

By Doris C. Dumlao and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE PESO SURGED TO 51.65 to a dollar yesterday from Monday's 51.96 as political tensions eased, boosting expectations that the state of national emergency would be lifted soon.

The local stock market surged as well, with the main price index jumping 33.6 points or 1.6 percent to 2,122.96. This was the Phisix's best close since Feb. 6 when it ended at 2,131.15.

The local currency opened at 51.77 at the Philippine Dealing System and hit an intra-day low of 51.820 and a high of 51.66 against the greenback.

"The market is expecting an end to all the political turmoil," a currency trader said, noting Finance Secretary Gary Teves' pronouncement that the state of emergency could be lifted by Friday.

Volume traded at the spot foreign exchange market amounted to $822.81 million.

"Financial assets classed back some of their recent losses as President Arroyo appeared to have weathered the latest storm," said ING Bank analyst Tim Condon.

However, Condon said investor appetite for Philippine bonds would depend on how quickly the President could restore normalcy needed for the lifting of the emergency declaration.

Philippine Stock Exchange analyst Zeke Gonzales said some investors tended to dismiss the latest political upheaval as "typical of the Philippine political landscape and nothing lost value."

"In our view, if the state of emergency is short-lived, then it should not have a measurable effect on economic activity and thus preserve the gains from the fiscal reform effort, which is the cornerstone of the positive view toward the Philippines," Gonzales said.

But if the state of emergency "should become permanent and start to slow economic productivity and revenue collections, Gonzales said it would be a real cause for concern.

"My think that foreign buying, which has been a key support for the market, may dry up until the

PAGE B2

February inflation seen at 7.6-7.9%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE COUNTRY'S ANNUAL INFLATION LIKELY surged to 7.6-7.9 percent in February from 6.7 percent in January due to the impact of the oil price shock and the 2-percentage-point increase in the value-added tax rate, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas said yesterday.

However, the BSP reported that growth in domestic liquidity slowed down for the fifth consecutive month in January to 8.4 percent year-on-year from 9.6 percent in December, indicating mutual pressure from the demand side.

BSP Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the projected rise in inflation for January was due to supply side pressures, the one-off price adjustments following the VAT increase last Feb. 1, higher oil prices in the global market, and moderate increases in food prices.

"The increase in inflation is consistent with the earlier projection of a pick-up in inflation in the first half of the year and deceleration in the second half," Tetangco added.

Domestic liquidity or M3, a key indicator used by the BSP in its monetary management, is an estimate of the entire supply of money in the economy, including money in circulation, demand deposits, money market funds and short-term repurchase agreements. If M3 growth is faster than expected, it becomes a key risk to inflation.

On a month-on-month basis, M3 contracted by almost 0.5 percent in January compared to a 2.3-percent growth in December.

Tetangco said strong remittances from overseas Filipino workers continued to pump more liquidity into the system.

He said the BSP was continuing to monitor the growth of domestic liquidity to ensure that it would remain consistent with the BSP's price stability objective.

"At the same time, the BSP will continue to pursue its efforts to strengthen the banking system in order to ensure that credit activity proceeds at a pace in line with real sector activity," Tetangco said.

The BSP expects inflation for the full year to range between 7.1 and 8.1 percent. Even the 4- to 5-percent inflation target for 2007 is expected to be slightly breached should inflationary risks persist.

CURRENCIES
WHAT'S INSIDE
McKinley revolt /B2
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Turmoil threatens RP credit standing, S&P warns /B4

McKinley revolt

WHILE THE REBEL DE JESUS were being distracted by the 400-SMA agitation of their third 30-rollopiper, the billionaire families of Makati were themselves being quietly subverted right in their own backyard.

Unknown to the Ayalas, who developed Forbes and Bonifacio villages, about two dozen homeowners of McKinley Road Farm managed to have the Ayala-imposed deed of restrictions on their properties lifted. Also lifted by the Makati Regional Trial Court, according to a McKinley homeowners

McKinley for the information of the peasants and proxmls, is the area in Forbes Park where the homes of Ayala and Roxas in The Rich.

The Ayalas, through the new homeowners' association, have notably sent a court battle against the McKinley group to extend the deed of restrictions—for 25 more years, if we remember correctly—thus keeping the residential character of the area intact for subdivision.

It is not immediately clear what the group's hands must for the lifting of the McKinley restrictions, but apparently the court recognized that the character of the once sleepy street had changed since the decades ago when Forbes and Dasma were carved out of original farmland.

The McKinley homeowners refused to discuss the details of his court victory for fear of tipping off the Ayalas about similar judicial relief being sought by the rest of the 34 property owners facing the next busy envoy.

According to the grapevine, Marcos ran to his Congay Atienza and Liberty Telecom chair Raymond Mitchell were the very first McKinley homeowners to have won the favorable court ruling, with the rest quickly and individually initiating their respective judicial actions, citing the Atienza and Marcos precedent-setting cases.

What apparently made the Makati RTC viewers easy was that the cases had gone unchallenged by the Ayalas and even the Forbes and Dasma homeowners' association which must likely had been unaware of such judicial proceedings.

With the lifting of the restrictions, up to five-story structures, instead of single- and two-level houses, can now be built along the McKinley corridor, paving the immediate motion of the entire strip into a Rufino Drive-type of neighborhood like what Ayannex and Moreno had been advocating.

The reverse price of real estate in McKinley is about P80,000 a square meter. Should the planned redevelopment push through and the 34-acre dismal loss facing the road be broken into smaller chunks, the price could double overnight, easily.

Cocktales

Victor C. Aguado

Money-go-round

■ DIGEST: Rufus and still-under loan Secretary Montemayor plans a Philippine and Singapore leasing for his activated carbon venture, reportedly after his company, Pacific Activated Carbon, obtained a long term supply contract from a major cigarette conglomerate.

■ After announcing record profits for the FLIPTOP/Hitet Group, president Napoleon Nazarenus left Manila right for an elite golf conference in Seattle, where one of the featured games would be...Spar Arena golf—paintballers gash fill fairies.

Heard through the grapevine

THE FOLLOWING Digest Statement Corp. is being presented through a threatened congressional campaign that—to extend a whopping P1 billion financial assistance to the ailing, but politically well-connected carriage bank.

(Email: cocktails_pda@philstar.net or cocktales_pda@yahoo.com)

P51B worth of gov't securities swapped

Stretching maturity of debts

By Michelle V. Ramos

INVESTORS SAVE SWAPPED P51 billion worth of old bet and notes your bonds for new Treasury bonds under the government's debt consolidation Program.

The finance of the Treasury (BTr) yesterday announced that investors traded in P114 billion worth of five-year bonds, and P17 billion worth of seven-year bonds.

The 60 national treasury for P51 billion—P34 billion in the two bonds and P28 billion in seven-year bonds—for only P51 billion worth of bonds were accepted, exceeding the minimum of P40 billion set for swaps by the government.

"The objectives of the exchange has been achieved. The success of this exchange shows how the government and the private sector can work together to develop our capital markets," said National Treasurer Omar Cruz in a statement.

The government's debt consolidation program calls for investors holding government securities to exchange their debt papers for new bonds that will mature at a later date.

The program was crafted to enable the government to better manage its domestic debt by smoothing the average maturity of its obligations for at least 4 years if not the average 4.7 years.

An investor holding an old five-year bond, for instance, that was supposed to mature in a few months was invited to swap it for some further bond that will mature in 2011 or 2012.

The program also lessened the bunching of old government securities for new three-year bonds.

Aside from smoothing the maturity of government debt, the program is also expected to boost liquidity in the domestic capital market.

Omar Cruz explained earlier that having longer-tenor bonds would make available a substantial volume of these, five- and seven-year government securities maturing at the same time.

There are sources that foreign investors down somewhat, compared to bonds with different maturity dates.

"We are enormously happy with the support that has been shown by investors, especially the private sector institutions, who continued to hold fast to the fundamentals of the market and were not distracted by temporary negative sentiments," said Philippine Business Bank president Teresita Sison.

BDO profit up

BANCO DE ORO Universal Bank, topped shares 50% banking group, reported a 29 percent growth in profit to P2.54 billion in 2005. Gross revenues also rose.

The rise is attributed to strong interest and fee-based earnings.

Citing year-end results last year, BDO said its net interest income had improved by 32 percent to P6.36 billion from P4.86 billion in 2004 as loan portfolio and interest margins increased.

Non-interest income was also up by 96 percent to P5.04 billion.

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The Management and Staff

Goings-on

ABS-CBN reorganization

TELEVISION GIANT ABS-CBN BROADCASTING CORP. YESTERDAY GAVE more changes in its organization to meet its financial performance.

Eric Espinosa, ABS-CBN's entertainment group head, resigned effective Wednesday to pursue other interests, the network said in a statement.

Espinosa will be responsible for total channel programming, on-air operations, and on-air performance and profit delivery of Channel 2, the flagship channel of ABS-CBN.

Antonio Ortiguza, managing director of Headstart and Summit Advertising, will join the network as head of marketing, bringing with him 20 years of experience in the communications and marketing industry.

Augusto Buscayno, president and chief operating officer of GMA Network, was named head of Channel 23's corporate development unit.

Benito is a seasoned media practitioner for 20 years and has occupied media directorships in advertising agencies like Isaac & Asociados and Hemisphere Communications.

Elizabeth L. Sarabia

Deferment of IPO requirement sought

THE PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE (PSE) YESTERDAY ASKED THE SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION (SEC) to defer the requirement that companies undertaking initial public offerings (IPOs) should be listed on the bourse.

In a letter addressed to Energy Regulatory Commissioner Chair Rodolfo Albano Jr., the organization said that while it was "committed to support the public offering provision of RA 9318 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira), this was not the right time for such an amendment."

The PSE explained that the implementation of this provision should be made under an environment that is conducive to the success of any public offering, and other relevant issues with regards to the public offering are resolved," it said.

The group said that while the offering of at least 15 percent of a generation firm's common stock was mentioned in the Epira, "the provision is not a directive to the generation companies to offer or sell to the public a portion of its common stock."

The PSE, also mentioned in the Epira, had already issued a resolution on Aug. 11, 2004 elaborating the public offering provisions of the Epira.

Abigail L. Go

Constitutional amendments pushed

THE CLOSE BUSINESS ORGANIZATION IN THE COUNTRY YESTERDAY announced its full support for a move liberalizing policies on foreigners' corporate ownership and property rights through proposed amendments to the Constitution.

Jesus Jose Romero-Suday, president of the Chamber of Commerce in La Consuelo, said the group strongly backed draft amendments that will amend the provisions on the economic liberalization in the country.

Romero-Suday said La Consuelo had urged the Consultation Commission to speed out its draft charter definitive provisions on the institutional rights of foreigners living in the Philippines.

Romero-Suday said La Consuelo was particularly pushing for a proposed change in the charter law that prohibits foreigners to have a stake with the law as industrial commercial or residential long for transferred or conveyed to foreign individuals or corporations with foreign ownership."

At present, the Constitution bars foreigners from owning land.

Rosanne M. Rustique

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Peso surges to 51.65 to $1; stocks up 1.6%

To see page B1

state of emergency is lifted," he said.

He noted that foreigners were net sellers of some P926 million worth of stocks on Monday after political tensions escalated during the weekend.

But analysts said yesterday's watershed gains indicated that investors were betting that President Arroyo would soon lift emergency rule imposed last week.

They added that many investors may have dismissed rumors of a coup plot to overthrow the Arroyo administration and were buying on corporate profit fundamental.

Total peso trades reached 30 billion with gainers overpowering losers, 176 to 111. Of total transactions, net foreign buying amounted to P2.645 million.

"The market is pricing in the resolution of placing the country under a state of emergency. Investors are expecting political issues to be resolved without much damage to the economy and corporate profits," an analyst of a local brokerage firm said.

Ford Joseph Garcia, chief investment officer at fund manager ING Investment Management, said the relief rally yesterday was a result of investors shifting their attention to corporate earnings as a possible catalyst.

Among yesterday's active stocks included holding firm SM Investments Corp., which rose 1.6 percent to P605. Bank of the Philippine Islands closed 38 centavos higher at P50.

'05 output hits 5-year high

Neda sees rise in demand for manufactured goods

By Michelle V. Rerva

THE OUTPUT OF THE MANUFACTURING sector, as measured by volume of production index (VoPI), grew 3.1 percent in 2005 from only one percent the previous year, reflecting an anticipated increase in demand for manufactured goods.

The National Economic and Development Authority noted that last year's VoPI was the best in five years.

The decrease in the volume of production was sometimes said to be relatively high especially in relation to the 9.1 percent last year. Capacity utilization rate measures how much manu

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Turmoil threatens RP credit standing, S&P warns

By Dwin C. Dantes

GLOBAL RATING FIRM Standard & Poor's yesterday warned that a long drawn-out political turmoil in the Philippines could pull down its sovereign credit rating.

In view, the rating firm based in the United States is keeping a "stable" outlook on the country's sovereign credit.

"Should the current political crisis worsen and become protracted, the risks are that both policy and economic reforms could be delayed," S&P said in a statement from New York. "Any signs that political considerations could undermine ongoing fiscal consolidation efforts will have negative credit implications.

"The resulting loss of investors' confidence could demand for a higher risk premium would also put upward pressure on interest rates (which is given that almost one-half of its debt is foreign currency denominated)."

Last July 9, S&P upgraded its outlook on Philippine debt ratings to "stable" from "negative," citing the country's ability to stick to its fiscal reform measures, which are needed to reduce its public and external debts while acknowledging the political risks that persist.

A "negative" outlook means that the sovereign credit could be downgraded over the next two to...

S&P's current rating on long term foreign currency debt was at BB-, or three notches below investment grade.

The rating agency said the present rating would remain despite President Macapagal-Arroyo's decision to declare a state of emergency.

Market analysts said investors would remain jittery until the state of national emergency was lifted.

US-based banking group JP Morgan recently warned that the declaration could rekindle political tensions and boost the mood of the political opposition.

"A state of emergency, especially if it is...ciated with the liberties of the populace, could raise the specter of the Marcos years in the 1970s," JP Morgan analyst Sui Heng Ong said. "This is a concern that could confront the opposition, which had hitherto been quite disparate."

Globe, Japan firm tie up for unlimited calls

By Dwin L. Lucas

JAPAN-BASED TELEPHONE MAY SOON make unlimited voice calls to the cellular phone network of Globe Telecom Inc. after an agreement was inked between the telecommunications firm and a Japanese service provider.

Globe's partner for the scheme is Fusion Telecommunications Corp. (FTC), a start-up firm based in Saitama, Japan, which plans to offer the value-added services to Filipinos living in the Asian country.

The tie-up with Globe is FTC Corp.'s first business venture.

Under the scheme, MS will offer its Premier Call service in Japan, allowing Filipino workers to make unlimited voice calls to their families and friends in the Philippines in a low fixed monthly fee.

"The service will primarily benefit the thousands of Filipino workers in Japan who want to keep in touch with their loved ones but have to limit their international calls due to the prohibitive cost of existing services," the company said in a statement. "With Premier Call, these Filipinos can be in close contact with their loved ones without fear of running up a big bill each month."

Premier Call is, however, a one-way calling service. It cannot handle calls from the Philippines to Japan.

Under the scheme, subscribers can choose from five plans, which will allow them to call between one and five Globe or Touch Mobile members in the Philippines from Japan.

The plans are priced at 7,000 yen, or about P2,900, a month for the light plan (unlimited calls to one number); 9,000 yen, or P3,750, for the basic plan (two numbers); 12,000 yen, or P4,975, for the deluxe plan (three numbers); 15,000 yen, or P6,900, for deluxe plus plan (four lines); and, 18,000 yen, or P8,400, for deluxe plus plus plan (five lines).

FM Corp. president Yoichiro Miyake said that his company hopes to capture a significant portion of the communications needs of an estimated 300,000 Filipinos working in Japan.

He said the firm has so far set aside 100 million yen to fund the company's all-services needs in the Philippines and Japan.

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NOTICE TO SHAREHOLDERS OF KEPPEL PHILIPPINES MARINE, INC.

All holders of shares of common stock of Keppel Philippines Marine, Inc. (respectively, the "Shareholders" and "KPMI") are hereby notified that on 27 February 2006, KS Investments Pte. Ltd. ("the Bidder") filed a Tender Offer Report (SEC Form 19-1) with the Securities and Exchange Commission ("SEC") and the Philippine Stock Exchange ("PSE") pursuant to Section 19 of the Securities Regulation Code. The Bidder, which is a corporation duly organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the Republic of Singapore, intends to acquire 70,000,000 or 11,666,666,666 common shares of KPMI.

The Tender Offer shall commence at 10:00 a.m. on 1 March 2006, and end at 4:00 p.m. on 28 March 2006 (the "Tender Offer Period"). Common shares of KPMI to be tendered in the Tender Offered ("Offer Shares") may be tendered to the Philippine Stock Exchange ("PSE") on 6 April 2006 (the "Cross Date") subject to PSE approval. Should any of the business days during the period from 1 March 2006 to 28 March 2006 be declared by the Central Bank of the Philippines or the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas as a non-banking holiday after the filing of the Tender Offer Report (SEC Form 19-1) on 27 February 2006, the period shall be extended by the number of business days corresponding to those which were declared as non-banking holidays.

The purchase price for the acquisition of the Subject Shares is Php 1.00 for each share (the "Tender Offer Price"). Payments shall be to Philippine Pesos and to the bank designated by Deutsche Knabe Japhet (DKJ) (the "Paying Agent"). KPE Stock Brokerage, Inc. (the "Financial Advisor") is the Financial Advisor to the Bidder. Total consideration that the Bidder will pay in cash, to satisfy full acceptance of the Tender Offer. The Bidder has allocated Php1,400,000,000 to cover for this purpose. The Bidder intends to pay the tendered and accepted Subject Shares on the 10th trading day after the close of the Tender Offer Period. Payment for the Subject Shares tendered and accepted by the Tender Offeree shall be made available to the Paying Agent for pay-out to the tendering shareholders after 9:00 a.m. on 11 April 2006 upon receiving the Offeree's duly completed Tender Offer Acceptance Form.

Every Shareholder of KPMI who holds stock certificates ("Scrip Shareholders") should submit within the Tender Offer Period their duly endorsed stock certificates and the duly accomplished Application together with the following requirements to KPE Stock Brokerage, Inc. (the "Depository"): 7th Floor, Tower One & Exchange Plaza, Ayala Avenue, Makati City, Telephone No. (632) 848-5888 (Contact Person: Rolando R. Enriquez):

If you are a CORPORATE SHAREHOLDER please submit the following:

1. Certified true copy/ies of the Articles of Incorporation and By-Laws of the shareholder and latest amendment thereof;
2. A notarized Secretary's Certificate substantially in the form prescribed by the Bidder setting forth the authority of the corporate officer/s or representative/s to sell, assign and transfer the Offer Shares, certifying the number and type of the Company's Subject Shares and designating the Depository as the Custodian;
3. A duly accomplished signature card containing the specimen signature/s of its authorized signatory/ies validated by the corporate secretary and certified by the notary public on the last page of the Tender Offer Acceptance Form where it is maintaining an account.

If you are an INDIVIDUAL SHAREHOLDER please submit the following:

1. Two (2) valid identification cards bearing the photo and specimen signature of the shareholder;
2. For shareholders acting through an attorney-in-fact, a duly notarized Special Power of Attorney in substantially the form prescribed by the Bidder (SEC Endorsement of stock certificates must be made by the shareholder himself);
3. A duly accomplished signature card containing the specimen signature of the shareholder and verified by the Depository. The signature card must be duly notarized and must be specified in office of the bank where the shareholder is maintaining an account.

For the convenience of Scrip Shareholders based in Visayas and Mindanao, the Subject Shares may be tendered by submitting the following requirements at the Cebu and Davao branch offices of the Depository, to wit: from 27 March 2006:

ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (Cebu Branch) Room 2001, Cebu Holdings Center Cebu Business Park, Cebu City Telephone No. (032) 232-4567 Contact Person: Cheryl M. Lim-Ko	ATR-Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (Davao Branch) Unit 1, 4/F SMI-FPIP Building, Category Avenue Lanang Davao Street, Davao City Telephone No. (082) 301-5000 Contact Person: Miguel Luis R. Aquino

Other qualified Scrip Shareholders in Visayas and Mindanao may tender their respective Subject Shares only with the Depository's head office in Makati City.

The Depository will submit the share certificates for validation to KPMI's Stock Transfer Agent, Securities Transfer Services, Inc. (the "STSI") at 2nd Floor, Securities Clearing Corporation of the Philippines Building, Exchange Road corner Ortigas Avenue Extension, Pasig City. On 10 April 2006 and 11 April 2006 STSI will issue the corresponding Certificates of Stock Ownership in favor of the Depository. Tendering Shareholders who submit their duly accomplished Application on the last day of the Tender Offer Period, but whose share certificates for validation in KPMI's Stock Transfer Agent, Securities Transfer Services, Inc. (the "STSI") at 2nd Floor, Securities Clearing Corporation of the Philippines Building, Exchange Road corner Ortigas Avenue Extension, Pasig City. On 10 April 2006 and 11 April 2006 STSI will issue the corresponding Certificates of Stock Ownership in favor of the Depository. Tendering Shareholders who submit their duly accomplished Application on the last day of the Tender Offer Period, but whose share certificates for validation will be submitted to the Depository after the Tender Offer Period, may submit their respective Application Forms to either the Depository's Cebu or Davao branch offices for processing. Tendering Shareholders whose shares are lodged with the Philippine Central Depository Nominee Corporation ("PCD") ("Scripless Shareholders") should instruct their brokers to electronically transfer their shares to KPE Kim Eng Securities, Inc. (the "Broker") to the Broker's PCD account no. 0000-0000-00 on or before the end of the Tender Offer Period. The Broker must transfer the shares to the Depository's PCD account no. 0000-0000-00 on or before the end of the Tender Offer Period. Tendering Shareholders must have the right to withdraw any tendered shares at any time during the Tender Offer Period. For a withdrawal to be effective, a written notice of withdrawal must be received by the Depository the Scrip Shareholders or by the Broker for Scripless Shareholders before 4:00 p.m. on March 28, 2006.

Copies of SEC Form 19-1 may be obtained by Shareholders from the Depository/Broker at their addresses stated above. For inquiries about the Tender Offer, please contact Mr. Alfredo Enriquez of the Depository at the address set forth earlier in this letter.

'05 output ...

From page B1

hovering four months under the production capabilities of their factories.

"I expect utilization rates to be quite good," said Dennis Arroyo, director for policy and planning of the Personal Economic and Development Corp. "It showed that manufacturing firms expected an increase in demand."

In 2004, reports utilization rate was at 79.2 percent, Arroyo added.

The PSOs said the following industries were the major contributors to growth: fuel (61 percent), chemical products (18.8 percent), and paper, 3.4 percent.

Arroyo said the higher production volume of manufacturing from last year boosted growth of the manufacturing sector, reaching 5.3 percent in 2005 from 1.2 percent the previous year. The other two major sectors—agriculture and services—posted declines of growth last year.

Gleaning figures from the National Statistics Office, a market analyst agency of the Neth, arrow reported that the value of production index (VAPI), which measures manufacturing output in peso terms, improved to 11 percent last year from 6.7 percent a year ago.

MOTORING

Edsir Cesar D. Manganaag

Hyundai fires up car market with CRDi tech

By Charles E. Gohan

THE DESIRE TO achieve the seemingly impossible is an issue such as engine technology and performance, perfect fuel, driving comfort and occupant safety, is constantly driving innovation in the automotive world.

In the ongoing technology field for example, diesels were previously expanded as smoke belching workhorses and seemed to have reached its limits in terms of performance enhancement and meeting more stringent emission standards worldwide.

Then came the breakthrough with the development of the common rail direct injection (CRDi) system, an advanced diesel engine technology that improves diesel performance and emissions level, making diesel engines on par with comparable gasoline engines.

Driving motivation

"The driving motivation behind the development of CRDi is the adherence to ever-increasing emission regulations while maintaining the drivability and low combustion noise characteristics of gasoline-driven engines, and the superior fuel economy of the diesel engine. Hyundai has taken up these challenging tasks by developing its own patented 12-bit technology and put it to some of its vehicle models," said Ms Agada, managing director of Hyundai Asia Resources Inc. (Hari), the exclusive distributor of the vehicle brand in the Philippines.

She added that such diesel technology is to be much affordable than gasoline and such automobile companies like Hyundai Motor are showcasing the latest technological innovations in their vehicles, like new injection system has found its way first into a number of vehicle models.

In the case of Hyundai, its Starex van, Elantra multipurpose vehicle and Tucson sport utility vehicle are now equipped with CRDi and have become among such homebuilders, Agada informed.

"But I strongly believe in the CRDi still remains a new technology benchmark for diesel," she said.

High pressure

While conventional diesel systems must build up the required injection pressure for each injection cycle and are therefore dependent on engine speed and load (resulting in loss of performance), with CRDi, a high pressure for fuel delivery is maintained at all speeds, giving a single desired fuel line (the common rail) to the cylinders, resulting in a diesel engine that runs more smoothly, has noise (a common complaint of such engines for decades) and goes further for each liter of fuel.

"While Hyundai's patented CRDi technology, our equipped vehicles exhibit an improved fuel efficiency anywhere between 10 percent and 15 percent. Because of a more complete combustion, power or output is also increased, anywhere between 15 percent and 20 percent compared to non-CRDi engines of similar displacement," Agada informed.

She added that because a CRDi engine electronically controls engine pressure, fuel quantity and injection timing, the vehicle delivers much lower nitrous oxides and particulate emissions, making it more environment friendly than other diesel vehicles in the market today.

"Indeed, CRDi engines are a major breakthrough for meeting more stringent emission standards and Hyundai still definitely be in the forefront in the industry's continuing quest to refine diesel technology," Agada concluded.

On emission testing; Isuzu's power train

I LIKE WHAT TRANSPORTATION AND COMmunications Secretary Leandro Mendoza did recently. That is, that he has entrusted his leaders that all motor vehicles entering their respective vehicles tested only by private emission testing centers (PETC) endorsed by the DOTC under a joint commission.

And what are PETCs?

They are those that are linked to information technology (IT) providers that upload their emission examination test results to the DOTC-IT system.

It is, therefore, mandated that motor vehicle owners must make sure that their emission tests are conducted only in those PETCs with providers of the DOTC-IT system, otherwise they will not be able to register their vehicles, this is the intent of Department Order No. 2005-11.

The reason for this new advisory is that there is quite a proliferation of fraudulently issued Certificates of Emission Compliance (COC) issued by those in the vicinity of motor vehicle inspection centers (MVICs), meaning vehicles that meet the issues of Metro Manila and other key cities in the country.

As mentioned, Mendoza—Secretary related in his attempt to curb such other crimes—has issued his DOTC Department Order 2005-30 and DO 2006-01 on Oct. 11, 2005 and Jan. 11, 2006, respectively. Both documents were published earlier. Mr. Wilma, the all of us health-conscious folk, recognize that air pollution affects the health of the country's citizens and makes a toll on the country's economy.

The directives likewise provide for the implementing rules and regulations on the interconnectivity between the PETCs and DOTC-IT providers and the monitoring mechanism governing such issuance.

To ensure the integrity of the emission test results and the efficiency of operations, PETC and IT providers will not be authorized to cooperate by the DOTC and legislation committee unless they comply with said orders.

In particular, PETCs are required to upload all emission test results to their IT providers within 24 hours upon receipt of the MVIS 31-01-07 report.

While the main endorsement of the "No Emission Test, No Registration" policy of DOTC and LTO, and to avoid long queues at the LTO registration transaction, motorists had better check that the PETCs that they go to for emission testing have DOTC-IT providers that are interconnected with the DOTC-LTO system.

It will be recalled that Republic Act 8749, known as the Clean Air Act of 1999, mandates the DOTC to implement measures to inspect motor vehicles and to authorize PETCs to conduct emission testing.

So there. Anyone not complying with the rules will suffer the consequences.

* * *

Hyundai's proud symbol of heritage, the Pony, hasn't found a new ally in the Isuzu Brabenman.

In a fitting way of confidence, the national alliance of engine specialists and manufacturers chose Isuzu's 4JA1 turbo diesel engines to power their cities of the 21st century hopper.

The 4JA1 is also further to the cap of Isuzu, whose reputation as an executive was just of tough, dependable commercial vehicles for the past 40 years, to be considered a high-efficiency, low-emission and comfortable. If there's one group of motorists who know a thing or two about powerful and economical diesel engines, it's certainly the jeepney operators and drivers.

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

But while jeepneys in the past used naturally aspirated engines, the modern jeepney, which the Philippine Jeepney Operators and Drivers Alliance Foundation Inc (PJODAFI) built, already boasts of a brand-new Isuzu Powermax diesel engine specifically designed for automotive applications.

The Powermax engine developed by PJODAFI president Orlando Marquez—is an air-cooled turbo intercooled model that delivers 75 horsepower (hp).

The project was carried out under the direction of the Department of Transportation and Communications and was launched in Quezon City.

Present during the launching ceremonies, Marquez, DOTC Secretary Leandro Mendoza, DOTC Assistant Secretary Ismael Lucas, LTFRB Chair Maria Elena Bautista, Jeepney Drivers Federation Melvin Reyes, PNTC Undersecretary Rolando Mirasol Jr., Isuzu Philippines Corp. president Yoshifumi Inoue, and other government officials and representatives from the industrial and government leaders of transport groups in Metro Manila.

As Lucas Marquez said his group's objective is to "provide the country with clean, high-powered jeepneys to transform the jeepney's practical and efficient means of mass transport. Isuzu as a potential dollar earner for the country, and the Philippines as a market for this engine, we are confident that, as of my love by DMA, are expected to be progressively implemented for Filipinos at these locally made engines. The 4JA1 engine is expected to help the country in its efforts in improving the national economy and expanding the government's globalization efforts.

As I can find over-indebted country on the lips of Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro Jr. in Isuzu's continuing search to progress.

QUOTE ME. We drive out of town, you need to have enough test on the one of the trip.

When plan B fails

MY DRIFT

André Pahua

FRIDAY MORNING, SEBU EARLY and I'm not sure where left that time as was painfully lamenting itself in my mind of the 'life will mess with you' kind of day. The kid's mom is in a hospital bed and I'm stuck with a leaving bittersweet and of course, I have many memories and I have to gladly stand down from the 'Mr. Responsible' role to be with my fiancé there now, my at the same moment a spate of 'fun' and uncertainty were always running up in the back of my mind, I suppose to the best and worst, to quickly! Wishes in February.

Then, coincidence with my daily morning routine set quite method. The Department of Education no longer feels the keys to an isolated classroom with the kids' daily morning routine set quite method.

The Department of Education no longer feels the keys to an isolated classroom with the kids' daily morning routine set quite method. Now, half to be attended to and for that to happen, I had to find a mate from my apartment to my family Yonas, Makati, in my office on Ayala Avenue, to the heart of Quezon City.

Options for my email 20-item assistance were available; I was just a matter of collating all the media requests and editing through the thousands of e-mail messages I had been piling up in my inbox since the president broke, to this original, overdue apology.

Some situations where you too much information is a delaying handicap rather than to sell in quick decision-making.

Hope for the best

Right off the top of my head were three very obvious and very different options for getting to work. First, I'm sure the ridge straight down Edsa and hope for the best. You have to understand, the morning rush hour traffic, any sudden flat tire, stalled vehicle or some to resemble the early Sunday 8th. Regular working days will cause drivers and passengers alike with setting sail minutes of traffic, I'm sure of it. It moves, just to the point you are overly lethargic, mad will eventually rile. In this circumstance, make it a point to keep your cool.

Last Friday morning was by no means a regular day, even if we were all trying to act like it was. On the path straight down Edsa (Senator Ninoy Aquino Avenue, Taft Avenue, Roxas Boulevard, Dewey Boulevard, the northbound lane of Manila's main thoroughfare was packed with cars, trucks and buses and I can foresee who believed they had a rightful stake in the future. Each of the lanes seemed a mutant amalgam of the vehicles occupying it, with the occasional motorcycle sneaking during last Friday's commute. That's a lot of hopefuls commuting into a city experiencing a boom in the sale of parcels of public and real estate.

Another gamble

The 8 spaces for Friday involved another gamble, albeit safer and quite a bit because some of the vehicles were in the middle of the road. Now, I'm not sure if ownership is a very real possibility—or just "little snatches of dreams" as Jack Johnson would put it in his latest song, "Sitting, Waiting, Wishing." Like though, reality hits home with pedestrians and automobiles zipping past with deadly speeds. And there are the trucks at jackknife when they make breaks for and screams, jaywalkers. This is the kind of gamble in real life, ladies and gentlemen.

Despite the very genuine danger of U.S. last Friday it seemed the only other viable option for much is barely viable. It was a foregone conclusion of course that almost every other vehicle on the road was a motorcycle and one would take the same route, for at least the specter of a raging dispersal, with typhoon-like winds and torrential rains.

Given I might remind my dissolution, but at least I did not have to keep my eyes peeled for any sudden U-turns.

Shortcut route

The final option for the day was the Makati-Mandaluyong route, via San Juan. This is shortcut, I'm sure, but probably the safest. I'm sure a lot of people will be going to their wits when they drive through the Guadalupe Bridge, the northbound lane of Ayala Avenue, to the heart of Quezon City.

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Despite the very genuine danger of U.S. last Friday it seemed

Biofuel drive stalled

ON THE ROAD

Aiden Serville-Mendoza

DESPITE THE FREquent price swings of petroleum, legislators have pushed for the use of alternative fuels; appears to be stalled in Congress.

Rep. Juan Miguel Zubiri's biofuels bill was passed by the House of Representatives and sent to the Senate in November 2005, only to get stuck in the Senate committee on energy. There is no news, either about the progress—if any—through the legislative mill of Sen. Alfredo Angara's bill for the compulsory use of biofuels in motor vehicles.

The government's drive to promote the use of indigenous-based alternative fuels is being approached by car manufacturers in different ways. Ford Motor Co. Philippines is introducing its P1.3 billion Brazilian-built sedan ostensibly priced to be able to go on cheap fuel gasoline-ethanol a year. This fuel engines run on either gasoline or a combination of gasoline and 20 percent bio-ethanol.

Flex-fuel

Ford plans to produce 180,000 flex-fuel engines over the next five years, 60,000 of which will be exported to the Asian region. Ford Philippines' 20,000 will be sold locally. This would make the Philippines the Southeast Asian center for flex-fuel technology.

On the other hand, the Chamber of Automotive Manufacturers of the Philippines Inc. (Campi) recently issued a memo on the use of vegetable oil. Campi president Elizabeth H. Lee said that consumers should be free to choose the type of motor fuel they will use, taking into account quality, cost and availability.

Campi thinks that United Motors should not be machinery and must conform with the technical standards of the Worldwide Fuel Charter (WWFC) which are based on carbon-based studies done by automotive engineers and developed by global automotive and engine manufacturers.

Whatever your endorsement/ workings of the vehicle outlay systems does not apply here; no MLF. Or window or dedicated holders in the front. It's best to keep the vehicle on six and a traffic enforcer about the codes, but by that time, it's too late, as some of the vehicles will start of violently already. The practically accommodates class of Makati and San Juan exercise their self-centeredness in the manner.

So, roundly, where did I park? Did I even make it to the destination? Of course not, my choices now are U.S. just took too much of a toll on both my patience and sanity. Well, I'll be honest, I actually enjoyed in view of Friday's shop in. Like that just happens to self to you. I would be lying if I said there was no sense of fear, given many of the circumstances of the traffic was swerving in much, my real saying, "You should have just biked."

Mix blend

The point was made that the allowable maximum blend by volume of ethanol with gasoline is 10 percent, gas vehicle engine specs, while the max blend by volume of fatty acid methyl esters or vegetable derived esters (such as coconut methyl ester) is also limited to 5 percent. The Campi memo adds Angara's biofuel measure as it mandates a 5 percent (M5 blend.)

Back in June 2004, Campi had already issued a memo on the pronouncement of Energy of an existing policy that the warranty of a home vehicle shall be considered null and void if the owner uses biofuels, albeit an improper one and investigation that a problem was caused or proven to be attributable to the use of bad or solid-free not recommended or approved by the manufacturer.

The problem or problems caused by the quality are those affecting the fuel tank and fuel lines, engine fuel pump and injector, cost, electrical system, exhaust system and other related functional components.

Warning

Campi came on biofuels a similar to that of Automakers Council of Automotive Importers Association which issued a warning last year that unless the fuel system components have been designed to the limits of compatibility with ethanol, they may fail since ethanol is a solvent that can dissolve metallic and rubber-based fuel lines and other fuel system components including plastic ones. Further, that since ethanol has an affinity for water, it may cause the corrosion of fuel tanks and fuel lines. In fuel injection systems, the use of ethanol-blended gasoline may result in early deterioration of the injector seals, delivery pipes, fuel pump and regulator.

The Royal Automobile Club of Victoria (RACV), like Campi, also believes that the government should not mandate adding ethanol to gasoline components in fuel, the RACV sounds signs to be placed on fuel pumps declaring the ethanol content and warning consumers to check with their vehicle manufacturer before using ethanol-blended gasoline. Ethanol is a gaseous ethyl alcohol (EtO) or ill ethanol (EtOH). In foreign, by the way, the max level is 10, or keep that in mind. If you buy a European car after the coming years see if biofuels become law here.

Hybrids

Meanwhile, Toyota and Honda are hot hybrid cars. Honda's sudden e-gasoline engine with an electric motor to get more mileage than a conventional car. Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. is waiting for the arrival of its hybrid Camry sedan to make available the CBU (completely built up) importation of the Prius, America's top-selling hybrid vehicle this year. Toyota will launch the 2007 Hybrid Synergy Drive Camry in the United States.

Honda Motor Co. reportedly planning to introduce its hybrid version of the Jazz subcompact in several markets around the world. Honda's first hybrid car was the Insight. Honda also sells a hybrid version of the Civic and the Accord in the United States.

* * *

TODAY'S JUMPIN' JACK: Oh, by the time you make ends meet, they move the ends.

E-mail comments to auto@inquirer.com.ph.

Too many visiting relatives?

Check out the AUTOMOBILE RENTING classification in the

DPC YELLOW PAGES

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 1986 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

25 LIFESTYLE

Editor-Chair Raoul Fernandez
Chief of Correspondents Piers Paster

TIME TO GET ANGRY

We were all set with our planned issue. A Valentine special that would spread love this week by publishing the winning entries of our Valentine promo.

But the events that took place last Friday cannot be ignored. Many of us woke up to the news that the president had declared a state of national emergency. Why? We spent hours watching the news, wondering what would happen next. Our hearts ached when we saw policemen arrest professor Randy David.

"You're arresting us?" he asked.

"Yes," a policeman who looked more like a Tagalog movie villain said.

"On the basis of what?" professor Randy David asked.

"Proclamation 1017! Go!" the policeman said, pushing the professor into a car, as if force could make up for the lack of explanation.

Then we watched as rallyists were beaten with rods. They hurled stories at us, the policemen said. But one man was down and they were still beating him.

Then we heard that the Tribune office got raided. And our outrage grew.

What's next?

Friday was a day of irony. Instead of celebrating a beautiful day of people power and true freedom, our stomachs churned as we witnessed the rape of democracy.

This issue is our reaction.

What do you think of Proclamation No. 1017?

Philippines, listen: This is the youth talking

"[I] BITTERLY [CRY] WHEN PROCLAIMED. Because the state was under a clear and present danger. If there was clear and present danger, it was only against the administration. Not the administration is not the issue. Mrs. Aquino wants us to believe that we should step and [have confidence in our taking] measures. Do I? Tell you what is under clear and present danger: our sanity. We can't let ourselves become a people who put the economy above moral principles."—Isampon.com

"Just put a duct tape on every Filipino's mouth, tie their hands and feet and go back home and get drunk on spoiled pinoy so they can continue planning world domination."—Rhind, 22

"You want to know why I'm not proud of my country? There you go."—Anonymous, 19

"I think it's an overkill. It may have attained its objective, but it just confused the people. If there's slow drastic move prior to both the peace and order, I'd go for that."—Gilchrist, 23

"Goodbye freedom, hello curfew!"—Lucila, 35

"It's a waste of time. I think Ghida should focus on cleaning up her act instead of heading off her detractors."—Sanchez, 22, architect-in-the-making

"It's a whiff of martial law."—Wade, 29

"It's stupid. Ka-pronto-pro."—Dale Lopez, 20

"To be honest, I feel apathy. I just feel that even with the state of emergency, everything is still unreconciled as shown by the massive coverage of the Fort Bonifacio stand-off. Honestly, I hope the media [especially TV stations] would stop sensationalizing every action. It just makes matters more worse."—Jess, 27

"It's blue-ruler."—Dimakuliba

"I feel that it's a hindrance to our personal freedom and should be lifted. Sana nasa is not the answer to any crisis."—Jhun

"Little excuse to suppress the people."—Wesly, 28

"Gloria is so afraid to lose her position that's why she declared the state of emergency. Obvious talaga."—Mike

"Under the Constitution, Proclamation No. 1017 is a valid exercise of executive powers. However, it does not confer any additional powers on the President, which only Congress can do so. Therefore, the actions of law enforcement agencies of forcibly/violently arresting people without valid search warrants, the 'forced' meals by governors on the press and other curtailment of civil liberties is highly illegal and unconstitutional."—Herbert Javier Mas, 35

"I don't feel it at all. It's just that I'm stuck at home. I just know that there's no actual emergency like the Ilaw-kaw-Gardo or something. Just some old people-power grabbing."—Andy

"The proclamation was inappropriate to the situation. Before it should be declared, a situation where there is total chaos and disorder must be present. This is another discussion in the making."—Melissa

"It's not about but it's not the proper use of power either. GMA is just too scared to be toppled. She's just drinking too much coffee."—Osprey, 23

"Whether we admit it or not, Proclamation No. 1017 is a cause of martial law for us who were not there during the time of Edsa 1. Of course, it is important for a country's leader to know how to handle a crisis, but then it should not be to the extent of suppressing everyone who would get in the way, including the media. The people need to know the issues so that they can decide and make a stand on the problems of the country today—to practice real citizenship in a democratic country."—Aldie

"GMA took threatened that people power, which made her rise into the presidency, will also be the reason for her downfall."—Ali, 19

"It is our right to issue Proclamation No. 1017. Filipino people have been caught up with these savage armies [politicians] seeking no favor a piece of the cake [guaranteed]. I do not want to continue to convince the mind of my countrymen to rally on the streets so to go after our democracy. Look at the statues, they are just merely token advantage of by those seeking to grab power."—anonymous

"The powers appropriated to the President after declaring a state of emergency are being used to violate our human rights and the rights enshrined in our Constitution. Condemning assassination attempts, suppressing the freedom of the press and silencing the voices of those in power—these should be stopped. Suddenly, I feel like Freese-Ganges in the Philippines, but to commemorate Edsa. Where has our democracy gone?"—Ena, 21

"The President should take caution against violating human rights during the state."—CI

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NUWAG KANG MAG-YEHEY DAHIL WALANG PASOK

By Erica Claris C. de los Reyes
Contributor

NUWAG KAYO SUKUNG DAHIL hindi matuloy ang long sex mo, maraming nagpuyat para mag-aral dapat sa finals na eksamen sa psychology mga magulang ako, sa halip na ligtas ako sila sa bahay kasama mo, na sana sana kasabay ng mahigpit kang mga magulang nilalayon mo iyo, ay magkakaibigan pa rin sa araw na iyo. At kaso maaaring nakakilala ka lang sa isang bwang araw, nagsumpit ng MTV at halip na mga kaklase.

Babaybayin ng mga magulang mo ang mga kalsadang maaaring pumunta para sa concert ng mga isang kanang sa rally, papunta sa mga kompetisyong tumatanggap lang ng mga nakakabang paling sa tatlong pinakakilalang unibersidad sa bansa ngayon. Iba rin 'yong mga kumpulang mag-aaral na iyo ng trabaho: cagkatapos mo sa kolehiyo, na siya rin naman mong magpapa na kasi mahirap na ang makakita ng trabaho.

Malaki ang na hindi mo nga kasalanan ni ganoon ang nangyayari ng pagsusuma: isang ng mga kumpanya ay pagbaba: na, sa kasi lang sa mahalaga sa diploma mo ang nakat ng kaloyalan mo—pero hindi rin kasalanan ng mga hindi nakapagtapos ng hanggang junior lang ang maaari sila. Na maaari sa sarili ang kalilangan nilang lugo kung sino ang tinatapag pinagsisi nila—Ilan mamayari, hindi ka sanay

Huwag kang mawawa kasi ngan na araw na lang ang natitira sa iyo para pumasok sa linggong na. Ang mga magulang mo, papaseb pa rin sa cocktails, makikihalubilo na naman sa mga negosyante at iba pang kapitalista na gaili na gaili na mga taong de-kalibre ang kwentuhan nila ng kwentuhan sa halaman. kasi dahil dito, hindi ka nakapasok ng hanggang dito, kaniliw na sino ang nalang hindpay na pervalues.

Huwag. Huwag kang ganyan.

Huwag kang mawawa dahil wala ring gamit noong nakaraang. Bywarnes. Huwag kang magpaya dahil may long weekend ka. Huwag isang silaan at kuwentong pagsapota sa mga ang nally at may kwentong ang kapalaan mo dahil na sila sa mga dahilan kung bakit ka nalagay patungo noong araw na iyon. Sa Ilang dahe ng buwa inlad ng Leyte, marami pang kanawa ang nakabuot sa dalas ng lupa at hindi na nanaggapang mali. Sa ilang nakal ng ahistoria, may mga nauna pa ring nangkaroon ng mga sitio na "Newsweek" kasi baka marado pa sila long sakali.

Huwag kang kalungit sa TV at pasweet ang mga kinderanko ng robby at pinagpapasig ng morning pulis kahit na nakakapa na lang ang hikbina at hindi na tanadahan, tapos nandidilan nang "Kawawa naman," pagkatapos ay cupo ka na ka pag-kainan nila kahit ng maaaring na bayanan. Hindi ka sanay

3) fed up sawa na, nagsawa na, nauglitlawa na, nayu na

Kung sawa ka na sa ormanyan ngayon, hindi ka lang yanot. Hindi ka lang yanot.

Kaya huwag lang mag-yehey dahil nawawalan ng pasok.

Ikaw ang nawalan nang silmilitan ang Proclamation No. 1017, 1017, hindi 1087, na dinalin nanibi ng mga kinumbulsang nakaraan, na kahalilimang hindi nakalam ang 1017 sa 1081. Nawalan ka ng karapatang mag-isip para sa sarili, kasi ipinapalit na iyo ng pamahalaan na ang Proclamation No. 1017 ay dekleraryon ng State of Emergency. Kailangan maiwasan ka doon. Wag lang nag-isip ka, alam mong wala kang pinaglalaba sa Proclamation No. 1081—ang Hamid Law.

Airports have come in shut since are already more than 100 political prisoners detained in military camps around the nation, over since yesterday's proclamation, all arrested without any warrants, all arrested under Proclamation No. 1017.

—Cpt. Rich Tan, News On 12 (by Adam David)

Ikaw ang nawalan ng karapatang malamang ang labat, ang nagbarsan ng cold sa Daily Tribune at Abante. Walang dahilan at walang warrant na ibinigay ang mga kinarakalan.

Ikaw ang nawawalan ng karapatang ipahayag ang sarili nang nawalan si Randy David at iba pang lider ng iba't ibang grupo na napunga sa kalsadaan ng Edsa pasa kanilang ang pagkadismaya na hindi mo pa nagagawa. Walang nalingat at legal na dahilan para sila ay dalpin. Ikaw ang nawawalan ng karapatang kumpanyang mag sarili, nang ilang kilometro ang inaasnan ng noong Biyernes. Kahit ikaw ay edad. Kasabay. Kung ipinagpaparti ka lang sa pamilyamo, maaaring ikaw ay isa.

[David] asked for a dialogue with Gen. Hermie Baldivia Jr. To his surprise though, he was apprehended in the middle of negotiations with the police officials.

To his further surprise, his names invoked *Proclamation No. 1017 to hold [for] his arrest.*

"What's that?" David blurted out as it was the first time he had heard of such a decree. "Nobody could tell me what it is. Obviously, not one of them has read, much less gotten hold of's copy of Proclamation 1017."

The abductees were from Bagong Silang in Caloocan, many were women and children, the youngest of whom was only 7 years old. David learned that they were arrested in Greenhills for a traffic violation—they were onboard a jeepney en route to the Nine Shrines that was out of line.

When David and his group were finally released to go, he thought *all of those detained, which by then had grown to 40, were also being set free. He found out that they had instead been herded to the camp's firing range.*

"Most were children from the slums who hadn't eaten since the time they were brought in," David said.

"My nerves are practically *—Randy David (blog entry by Ricoh Pabico)*

Ikaw ang nawawalanang negatibidad na sarili mong kanta ngayon dahil nagkaroon ng pag-isipan ng isang nakakaing inaritan, pagkatapos nilalalo na ganoon ang kanilang labis nang nalu kasi tatanong ngayon na kadalubhasan. Ikaw ang nalalagay na ekspresin dahil pilit ikinakabit ng pamahalaan ang isyun, at kung nanaimbala ka pa sa ating panglalo, maaaring hindi na nacurrentdanan ngayon ang gabi.

... the seven-hour standoff in the city subtly unit, which can tell it about 3 p.m. today, when Allege took over the Marina Command. Mirelda's relief, which the military top brass said was voluntary, but which Dumalin said was not, agitated the Marines stationed there to take action to prevent.

At past 3 p.m. today, Quezalin and hundreds the Marine headquarters to raise his objections to Mirelda's relief and asked civilians to protect him and his men. Thousands of supporters responded to the call, including politicians and prominent names.

Quezalin and his men were joined at the Marine headquarters by Lt. Col. Archie Segumalian, commander of the 2nd Marine Battalion, who also expressed disgust in Mirande's relief and urged at the way the Marines were supposedly being used to support the administration in its 2004 elections.

—Game Over? (by Jhoda Cervasio), Philippine Center for Investigative Journalism blog)

Hanson at Mikael:

Alkala ma da sha? Hindi? Ah-ra, hindi ka nila kilala. At nadamang ako, sapo, hindi rin nila kilala. Pero hindi sinag maraming. Hindi ako nag-sunog at panunog pare sa iyo.

O, naiwan ba? Ano ang ginagawa mo? Hanapawa ka pa rin ba ang nanood? Alamod lang? Hindi ka pala nakilala?

Ikaw ang kanilang pare?

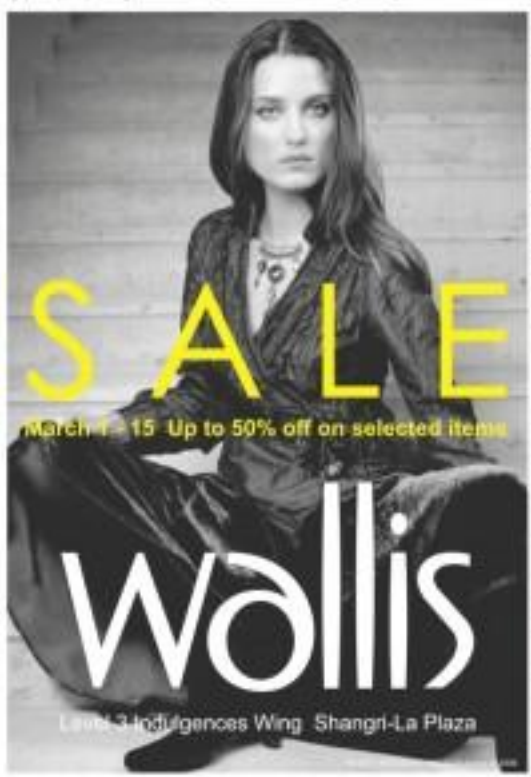
Ah-o?

—Isinulat ko sa isang nacushinsik? (blog entry ni Mikael Co)

Tinguan mo: Walang kanlya-niya sa nangyayari sa pahgid mo.

The author is a 19-year-old student at Ri Management majoring in Communication Technology Management at the Ateneo de Manila University. She first wrote the piece in her online journal.

E-mail the author at [illegible]



Who can we turn to?

By Jason Dupitas
Contributor

I WAS ABOUT TO LET GO OF ALL THE events that happened in the country no wait—in Makati—in the last two days, until I read the papers last night and learned that the army meddled with the Daily Tribune, to put it bluntly.

And according to a friend, the police were also parked outside other newspaper offices I was informed. Three I'd be in sugar.

I saw scary Chibi out of office.

What the f**k is she thinking, trying to intimidate the media?

Chief of Staff Mike Defensor said Tribune "now will have to say anything it wanted." Hindi naman pinapahintuan ang publikasyon pero gusto niyang ipaalam kung anong pwedeng mamin sa huwag huyong pagsisi ng balat sinumar sa mahahalaang si tribale (We are not meddling with the publication but we just want to stress our strong pressure to reporters not to do anything that will help the rebels).

"Pinapahiyaan na ang Tribune, pero kailangan humayan because we are in an abnormal situation (Tribune is being already humiliated but there's a need to guard it because we are in an abnormal situation)."

True. Montreal ngo. Ang loan na.

The day the government takes over any media outfit, that's the day it will find no buildings to its owners.

On the other hand, the reason these anti-1017 protest rallies aren't taking off is the presence of the armoreds. Take for example Cory's march in Ayala Avenue last Friday.

To her right was Tito Sotto. Behind him was Joggers Estrada. (Who would want to march with these people? While I was watching the scene on TV, I couldn't help thinking that perhaps, behind Cory's smile, she was thinking, "Could anyone be nowhere near me, pls lender?"

In order for the majority of the people—or Gen. Ano to be exact, the middle class—to join Cory in her rallies, someone better make sure the armoreds are weeded off the stage and cameras.

I think one reason most of us are in hahala as made is that we are in no winning run sympathy. On one side, you have GMA. On the other, Cory, other people of questionable morals, and the armoreds. Sooo, hahala ala dyan.

The opposition needs to do a makeover and find a unifying moment or what we are in Greek now. And that means making sure we don't see the likes of Joggers making an appearance moment anymore. As if.

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INQUIRER JOB JOB

What do you think of Proclamation No. 1017?

From page 13

posted Proclamation No. 1017." –Ani, 17

"This can lead to another Edsa." –Mike, 24

"This is a suppression of freedom of expression." –Abdon Guevara, 30

"I am very alert to the rule. If they want to control things my dreams are destabilizing her administration. Yet the people she governs are paranoid of any proclamation similar to martial martial law. Personally, I believe it's symptomatic if the inefficient powers of her branch of government (executive), including the armed forces, is given broader authority from the people. Edsa Dos has. This is obviously not the case. But generally, the Filipino people have become an opinionated lot who, as the diploma descendant, jump at the chance to use the people power and the 'martial' story and evade the true facts very instead of sacrificing for the greater good. There is a need for discipline." –Ejipd

"Life is now unnecessary. The government should have thought of a different way to handle the situation. It just caused people to panic and the diamond. Devil that was Gloria's purpose, there is surely succeed." –Jimjo Consunjimbo

"The proclamation just shows NOthIn weak character, her being pikon. It spoiled the Edsa celebration altogether." –AdeMo

"Although the President has every right to make such a proclamation as commander-in-chief, it is really alarming how anxious taken by the government after the declaration...such as the raiding of the Daily Tribune...with an attack of martial law. It's as if the President thinks that the opposition's continuous destabilization plot isn't helping the country's progress in any way, but she seems not to see paranoia get the better of her. She must see even more than she's allowed by it. That's the sign of a coming leader. With Proclamation No. 1017, democracy is once again hanging in the balance." –Jimsaw

"She kept repeating on TV that there were threats against the country. But that's not true...the threats were just against her, against her position. Proclamation No. 1017 was an act of desperation, an attempt to hold on to something that's slipping away." –Kuneng Akebliosa, 19

"It's stupid. It's a lame excuse for people to act like animals." –Kuripapo, 19

"It was a great, canonical conversation. Still, she has done despite the violations of civil liberties people did not protest as much as the opposition hoped. Only a powerful rather than people's outcome of the opposition and its reactors...silences as much as they censure Ehh." –Jay-Sinta, 22

"The people need to know what's happening especially in the governance whether it is pro, over or negative. The media's purpose is to bring news to the people. They should know what is happening in the country." –Jonah at Work, 19

"History repeats itself. Aren't we seeing a repeat of what happened in our country more than 20 years ago? The government is getting more and more desperate in control everyone, not to sound the common good but for their own good. It's so pathetic." –KJ, 23

"We cannot claim to be a democratic country with Proclamation No. 1017 around. While the media and the senators are borderline, 1017 will only worsen the senator's already deteriorating image—people will fire in conversation and four." –Shamrie Cornejo, 23

"Doing an Iraq? Former President Cory had three real coups and hundreds and hundreds, but did she ever declare a state of emergency? Not NOthIn, purely to keep up coup. 1017 us! Aw, Marcos ull! APR wake up! Filipinos, wake up!" –Bell

"The proclamation stifles our right to freedom and speech and the responsibility of the journalists to provide information. This is actually interesting our country as it declines dissenting thoughts. If the government wants to solidify oversight, it should handle journalistic violations heavily, including the media in a clandestinous of time) weakened." –Chris, 22

"Eh, ito pa rin! Ah, ha! do I agree with the proclamation, yet I believe that it was necessary to stop the backward slide of the economy. I do see brilliant, though, that government should restrict the media from reporting the truth. If the government is doing what is according to the law, it should not fear the media." –Epidoy

"Proclamation No. 1017 has evidently magnified the storms in our nation. Its overt violent effects have wrapped. The proclamation is overall overall invalid and absurd." –Jarom, 21

"I think that the state of emergency is doing the country more good than it's hurting it. It prevents major violence from occurring. The government can give more focus on economic growth." –Ellen Aquino, 23

"It is for strong solutions. Suppressing freedom of speech will only provoke protests from the people. The proclamation brought the week modern down and forced other countries to issue travel advisories on our country. Goodbye, WOW Philippines." –Arnie De Guzman

"Are we really a democratic country in the first saying, 'Take it or nothing' make thing strong enough, what goes around comes around." –Jake

"There's a part of me that's for it because I'm aware that, ultimately it's the people that make up a country's economy so when we lose faith we fall our freedom if the people never allow it. A good government does what is has to do." –Liane, 20

"This isn't the proper time to declare a state of emergency. The Philippines is not experiencing a crisis of massive proportions." –Patrick Bonifacio, 20

"It's Gloria version of martial law. One would think that after everything that happened during martial law, something like a setback's happen again. I guess everyone was wrong." –Rona

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As if nothing happened

PARANG WALANG NANGYARI

On my way to The Red Ian Friday I expected it to be a veritable ghost town.

Watching the television and seeing people rallying in the streets, with footage showing rallyists being banned, did not exactly foster one's celebratory mood, 20 years after the revolution of rallies ultimate on the road that's now filled with billboards of Kiko Aquino.

The night I found at The Fort was not what I had expected. All's was playing in Friday night entertainers, and as usual, regulars filled the al fresco seating and standing area to the brim. Other restaurants were filled as well.

On our side we had Ed Riddler aka Richie Daughters, a Hongkong who is making waves around the world with his soundcloud boom music that can make you dance 24 hours non-stop... a definite participator.

I looked around the packed dance floor and observed people having so much fun, like there was no tomorrow, like it was a think Guns weekend.

And to think this was the eve of the "real" Edsa celebrations, the 20th of February.

People were partying even hard, literally. The crowd fate in the all-ages really started to appeal to me. It was as if nothing great was happening.

Have we become jaded to uprisings in the streets? We cringe and feel sad every time we see our country depicted in a not-so-positive light on CNN, BBC and other global networks, but once we turn off the TV set, so does our concern for our country.

A photographer friend was conducting a shoot with a famous celebrity that day. This singer is famous for promoting good values and wealthy causes. While watching the ABS-CBN coverage, they were all worried about the state of the nation. Once the lying declared, "Okay, let's get on with our photoshoot," the celeb readily posed and pretended as if not of his concern. Again, as if nothing was happening. It was business as usual.

At Edsa in Bayani's Maker was told that day I guess because school and work had been called off that day, some of them decided to make it a day of beauty. I overheard someone in another cubicle talking loudly on her mobile phone: "Wow! Talaga. I know there's traffic on Ayala now, but I'm in the parlor now having a lot of treatment with Hazel Catalang."

Puppetry and protest

A visiting American friend who is originally from North Dakota (with more pro-ex Filipino blood) was more involved. He wanted to go to the streets and take part in the rally. I just told him to be careful. I knew he was going to be safe. We are a peaceful people after all.

He returned to me with more than just stories of unrest. He showed me pictures of smiling Filipino faces, wearing at least, garbed in colors of one thing: it was pro-Edsa Dos. "I was called for, like 20,000 times," my friend, Travis Knoll, said, adding that he waved back at the amused rallyists.

On Ayala Avenue, vendors were selling peanuts and people were lounging around. He even spotted another American guy pushing a baby stroller. Yup, the guy brought his baby to the rally!

I have been to Edsa myself in the past. I mean Edsa Dos (not the first one because I was still a baby at that time—and my dad didn't bring me there on a stroller). In fact, I even celebrated my birthday right smack in the eye of the action. There, I totally felt the spirit that makes us Filipinos proud.

But I went there with my own free will, because I wanted change. For the better.

Maybe the difference now is that most people who march in the streets are paupers, and hundreds of hungry Fili who are made to forced to go. (by who: I do not know)—some of them don't even know why they are there in the first place.

Except for the people in the front lines who hopefully still really care passionately for what they're fighting for, the rest of the less pallid who gathers the streets were there for other reasons. Thus, the spirit of "fighting in the streets" has been lost.

Even the venue for protest has changed. From once-famed Edsa, the venue of the action is now in upscale Ayala. It proves it to us all: the elite who do the puppetry behind the protests.

And for those people, and the ones good for all of us... after the turmoil, it's just frustration as usual.

Parang walang nangyari.

TIME AFTER TIME, again and again

LIFESTYLE 24/7

CHAMP Lui Pio (lead vocals), Rell Martinez (guitar), Sheldon Orillada (bass) and Connie Santos (drums) rehearse their new songs.

IT'S SHOW TIME! Hale performs before screaming fans.

Hail to Hale

IT'S BEEN NEARLY TWO YEARS NOW since Champ Lui-Pio, Rell Martinez, Sheldon Orillada and Connie Santos got together to form a band, create their own music and share it with the rest of the country.

Thus began the journey of Hale, one of today's hottest and most in-demand bands in the country.

Not only have they raked in countless awards and citations for their chart-topping hits "Broken Sunrise," "The Day You Said Goodnight" and "Kahit Pa," they've also won the hearts of music lovers and the soul of hard-to-please critics. Their schedule is now jam-packed with mall shows, TV guestings and even more gigs.

And so it's not a big surprise that these always-on-the-go guys love to binge, jump into the shows, and chill out whenever their schedules permit them to do so.

Just what is the band's definition of fun? Apart from 20/20 roundtown and basketball, when given the opportunity to take a breather, they happily indulge in simple pleasures like hanging out with the boys, joking around, and bonding no matter noodles, pizza, barbecue from the nearby carinderia or even each other.

Wherever they're awake through, it's mainly music that fills up their days. "We're working on this full time," says Rell. But as much as they want to bond over the studio and rehearsal, the lack of time often proves to be an obstacle for the Hale guys.

"The thing is that we don't have time, so it's just gigs," adds vocalist Champ. "Whenever we have free time, we spend it with our families," adds Rell. But rehearsals are mostly not the only times spotted in the band members' books.

The fans—or the Haliers as the band members themselves call them—are the guys' inspiration, the main reason why they're always giving their best and why they vow to make nothing but the best music possible.

According to the band, they've got the most devoted followers on earth. Take for example, Haliers who troop to Tayug, Ilocos, all the way from Alabang, or Haliers from Baguio who don't care if they get drenched by the rain, just to be able to watch the band performances.

In such a short span of time, much has truly changed for these young musicians from the South. Complete strangers recognize them and ask for autographs or pictures to be taken with them.

After the self-titled debut album, a repackaged album with videos and a new song is coming out this March. Definitely, Hale is on a roll.

CHAMP signs autographs at the concert venue.

TEAM spirit becomes Hale with a short prayer prior to going on stage.

CHAMP and Connie joke around over a quick dinner before their concert.

TV HOST and model Phoemela Barranda

THE PERFECT FIT Phoem forgets stress when she goes shoot

A SHOPAHOLIC, Phoemela can't resist good finds

The busy and the beautiful

JUDY Ann revels in simple pleasures when not busy working

A NATURALLY sociable person, Phoemela never mi a chance to catch up with her friends

LUCKY ME, FILIPINOS' FAVORITE INSTANT noodle brand, found its way into homes, schools and offices by providing delicious quick-meal solutions to busybodies. The range of Lucky Me! products addresses the ever-changing needs of the Filipino consumer. The result: convenient meals that are fun-free, affordable, and fortified with nutritious fun.

Lucky Me! substitutes those individuals who, despite their youth, are cashing the urban jungle with ease and grace. For those getting busy here, managing time has become an art form. Between their countless public engagements and all-night shootings, conversations has meant weaving fast-free products into their lifestyles, like Lucky Me!

Lucky us love. Judy Ann Santos is one of today's most bankable actresses. Her beau, TV personality Ryan Agoncillo, is yet another bankbody. So how did the state-rumpler to get them together?

"We have so much in common," says Agoncillo, "and we genuinely enjoy each other's company."

The couple enjoys diving, playing video games at Timezone and watching movies together. Despite their common penchant for food (Santos can whip up some mean Intsara

JUDY Ann and Ryan share a playful moment.

LUCKY IN LOVE. Box-office star Judy Ann and television personality Ryan Agoncillo

LOVE and laughter

EPI winds down after a long day and catches up on missed calls.

RELAXING after work

RENAISSANCE MAN Epi Quizon is an actor, athlete, musician and artist, among other things.

songs and pizza), both religiously head to the gym to burn the calories.

"We're both into martial arts. I practice muay thai while Kym does jujitsu," says Epi Quizon.

While work takes most of their time, the two remain keen about pursuing their respective passions. For Agassiz, it's photography. "I have been taking photos and contemplating for three years now."

Agassiz, who also hosts the TV show "I Speak," reveals, "Judy Ann and I will get to spend more time together. Since my ex-boss, Monica Gonzalez, entered the 'Pinoy Big Brother' house, Judy Ann will be taking her place for the meantime."

The pair are very excited about what the future has in store for them, and are working hard to nurture a relationship they describe as "fun and fulfilling." Indeed, it looks like they're enjoying every second of it.

Lucky break. While Gil sprung into the public eye as the intriguingly phonetic singer in a soda commercial, Today, Nikki is a recording star, MYX VJ, model, TV show host, and a commitment-issues student.

The unassuming beauty says, "I believe God put me here for a reason. I'm trying to enjoy the student as much as I can, but I have my priorities straight. School still comes first."

That busy bee balances time like a pro. She studies in between her takes, catches up on sleep while in the car, and takes some meals in an instant.

An English literature major at Ateneo de Manila University, Gil was also her high school's batch valedictorian. "I work hard. I study hard. And I pray a lot. That's how I cope."

Some guys have all the luck. "Passion is what I have," says Epi Quizon. He's relieving, of course, to his dedication to arts, theater, music and film. His notable works now include "Kubrador," "Bahay" and "Pinoy Blondie." He also currently co-stars in the sitcom "Quizon this."

Recently, Quizon formed a new production outfit called Crazy Angle Productions, which gives him the opportunity to pursue thought-provoking subjects while pursuing his inclination for the visual arts. What's more, he sings and plays guitar for his band Mulatba, which will be releasing a self-titled album soon.

And did you know that Epi is a professional athlete? He is a former member of the Philippine Softball Team. A true renaissance man!

Fitness is inevitable in Quizon's lifestyle. To relieve stress and regain lost energy, he takes periodic breathers... from rendezvous with energy-boosting meals for the long day ahead.

"I love entertainment in general, regardless of form or medium. There is a flame inside me that burns for what I do. When things go crazy, I do theater. That's God (s)crewmed to that show business-ese again," he says.

Isn't the hectic lifestyle doesn't exist in Sharon Stoneside's vocabulary. The model-turned-host finds her latest ABS-CBN pursuit quite exciting. "Nothing is new to me, that's why it's so challenging," she says.

A sassy session. But sasha is also the public relations officer of the Professional Models Association of the Philippines (PMAP), a work that involves her in developing fresh talent and protecting models' rights.

So where does she find the time for all these pursuits? "I don't sleep," jokes Bernardo. "I'm always on the go and the levels of stress are very high!"

To deal with the pressure, she has a foolproof solution: Go iPhone, read a book or go shopping! Another good stress buster for her is taking soothing warm tanak that are convenient and energy-lessening.

EPI grabs a quick bite before getting ready for his cake in "Quizon this."

SINGER and MYX VJ Nikki Gil knows no bar-bore zones.

BEAUTY AND BRAINS girl Nikki Gil

RACE CAR driver Gaby-Abi Marcel

FITNESS expert Cheggie Andrada

The stuff champions are made of

TAEKWONDO Olympian Bonnie Geisler

SPEED ace Pia Bovee

BASKETBALL star Wesley Gonzales

EYE OF TIGER'S MOST FROM-none champs exert in their respective sports, but all agree that it takes a lot of heart and commitment to get as far as they have.

Olympian and Tae Gunno gold medalist Bonnie Geisler encourages sports among kids to enhance discipline and determination. "I'll be teaching taekwondo soon. I want to help make children champions," he says.

Fun-raising. Fun-punching Cheggie Andrada tries 23-hour days: As DJ for pop station Hi-Yo 91.1, host of the ABS-CBN TV show "Sports 7x7" a boxing instructor and software salesman.

"There are so many hazards to reading a healthy lifestyle, for me, the key is to nourish the body and spirit," she says.

Basketball star Wesley Gonzales is one of AUCE's best-known players partly due to his role in the historical win of the Ateneo blue Eagles championship in 2000. Concurrently, he is also doing stints for Makiri in Ateneo Administration classes.

"I always want to be on top of my game. Being the best I can be in anything is what motivates me," he says. "I really look up to my parents. They've instilled in me that drive to constantly improve."

2006 Red Lyte Cup racing champion Pia Bovee enjoys that fast lane. Whether it be breaking the speed limit or racing in the halls of her college to get to class, she is always ahead. "I've always admired people who consistently go beyond the limit," says the first Filipina to ever drive a Formula 3 car.

Gaby-Abi Marcel, on the other hand, is a 23-year-old karting, slalom and circuit champ. She says, "Sports motivates me because of the adrenaline. It has a lot to do with passion. Skating is a very precise sport, and I am so fascinated with the level of analysis and science required."

For Gaby Marcel, "Exercise, rest, and proper nutrition are very important to maintain fitness. It's good that there are convenient, ease-to-prepare meals available now for that quick energy boost."

Speaking of ease-to-prepare meals for quick energy boost, Lucky Me! salutes these busy go-getters and supports their achievements. A good afternoon for active people, Lucky Me! is easy to prepare and rich in carbohydrates, providing fuel so we can get through an active-packed day.